

The Evil that has been said of Doctors:

EXTRACTS FROM EARLY WRITERS.

COLLATED FROM "LE MAL QU'ON A DIT DES MEDECINS," OF

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CINCINNATI:
Reprint from the LANCET-CLINIC,
1889.

1778

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THE EVIL THAT HAS BEEN SAID OF DOCTORS.

EARLY GREEK AUTHORS.

ANCIENT WRITERS.

ÆSOP (8th Century B.C.).

THE OLD WOMAN AND THE DOCTOR.

An old woman had sore eyes and called in a doctor. When the price of service was settled the physician visited the patient at her home, and used ointment on her eyes. During these visits the old woman could not see the doctor, and the latter removed all her household goods, one piece after another. When all was taken the patient's eyes were cured, and the physician demanded his fee, which the old woman refused to pay and was therefore cited to appear before a magistrate. To the agent of the law she remarked: "I promised to pay this man if he restored my sight; but, my vision has grown worse; before, I could see my furniture, to-day, that is an impossible thing."

Moral: Thus dishonest men, through their avariciousness, amass proof against themselves.

THE PATIENT AND THE DOCTOR.⁽¹⁾

Æsop, that excellent author, in whose works all the graces may be discovered, has left us an account of how tyrannical authority may be exerted on those weakened and frightened by disease. He tells

the story of a patient who was questioned by his physician as to the effects of the medicine taken.

"I am sure," said the sick man, "that the medicine was good, for I sweated freely." "'Tis well!" remarked the doctor. The next time the physician interrogated the patient the latter replied: "I had a severe chill and trembled." "'Tis well!" answered the physician. The third time the medical man asked how his patient felt the sick one responded: "I feel swollen up and puffed out, as though I had the dropsy." And the doctor said, "Ah! everything progresses well." Presently a servant entered and inquired of the sick man regarding his condition. "Ah, my dear friend," replied the patient, "I am doing so well that I am dying."

THE TWO DOCTORS AND THE PATIENT.⁽¹⁾

One of those physicians, who are ever making visit,

Saying "Better," to those sick in bed a-lying,
Heard the sadly wearied patient say, "This medical 'what is it?'"

Knows my heirs are satisfied, and I am dying."

A patient told two different physicians, whom he visited, the symptoms of his dis-

¹ Montaigne, "Essays," livre ii, chapter xxxvii.

¹ The two fables that follow are extracted from a volume entitled "Les Fables d'Esopé

ease. Each time he went one doctor said, "You are better;" and the other remarked, "About the same." The patient, hearing this difference of opinion, was embarrassed as to which doctor to believe, as the choice appeared difficult; both physicians gave cogent reasons why they expressed such decided opinions, and the poor patient could not tell how to set his mind at rest. In the end, however, he believed in the doctor who always said "about the same," and followed all his prescriptions, dying finally. The medical men drew two advantages from this patient's death. "About the same" remarked that he had foreseen the outcome, while "You are better" stated that had the patient used better judgment and his remedies he would have recovered.

THE GRAVE-DIGGER AND THE DOCTOR

"It is an injury done; but I persuaded am,

He could not cure, although he strove to save.
The subject was unhealthy; nought, the doctor's balm."

Thus said the sexton, and he dug the grave.

A grave-digger was burying his neighbor; as he dug the grave he perceived the physician who had treated the deceased during the last illness. "I thought you skillful," exclaimed the grave-digger, "and imagined you would cure this poor fellow of his malady." Replied the physician: "I did all I could for the patient, but alas! the man was *unhealthy*." Said the grave-digger, dropping his spade, aghast: "If he had not been *unhealthy*, he never would have called you in."

"De tous nos charlatans excuse illegitime,
Le malade meurt il, il etait cachochyme,
La nature l'a-t elle, en debit d'eux gueri,
Il serait, nous dit-on, sans nous deja pourri."

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mises en Francais avec les quatrains de Benserade." Rouen, twelfth century.

MIMNERMUS (Greek poet, 7th century B.C.).

"This is the chatter of the doctors, who put themselves in favor and make excuses; doing their worst for sickness, and committing frightful injuries" (Stobæus, *Florilegium*, tit, cii).

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HERACLITUS (Greek philosopher, 6th century B.C.).⁽¹⁾

"If we except doctors, there are none more stupid than grammarians."⁽²⁾

LETTER FROM HERACLITUS, SICK WITH DROPSY, TO AMPHIDAMAS.

Grand consultation of physicians in my case, my dear Amphidamas, and but little delay in the matter; they will listen neither to medicine nor the voice of nature. One wishes one thing, the other another; all are profoundly ignorant. My body was swollen as a leather bottle; they did nothing save to relax it slightly by touching. Some wished to give me a remedy, which I refused to take. I demanded the cause of my sickness, and they responded not. They to treat me! Not much; it is I who treated them. "How," said I, "can you be artists on the flute when you leave it to those who do not understand the trade? I shall prescribe for myself, for I cannot consent to confide in you until you can tell by what method one can change humidity into dryness." None seemed to comprehend my remarks, and held tongue, doubting their own science. I well know their other patients have been cured, not by

¹ See in future reference the account of the death of this philosopher by Diogenes Lærtius.

² Athenæus reproduces this sentence in his writings.

themselves, but by chance. It is an impiety, Amphidamas, to lie and declare we possess a science we have not; to kill men under pretext of practicing an art, and thus to defame not only the true art, but Nature. To boast of one's ignorance is assuredly a shame, but to vaunt possessing a science that one has not, is more shameful still; and why choose such falsehoods to dishonorably acquire money? They would do better to beg openly. Perhaps we might pity them. Now, they are cursed as dangerous beings, and as liars. Among them there is not a physician, nothing but imposters and charlatans, who sell their sophisms at the price of gold. The divine Heracleodorus, my friend, was killed by them, and they made his estate pay for the deed; they cannot render an account of my malady, nor tell me how humidity may be changed to dryness.

* * *

PINDARUS (Grecian lyric poet, 5th Century B. C.).⁽¹⁾

PYTHIAN (ODE THIRD).

But the allurements of gain is a rock of danger for the wise. Ever seduced by a rich recompense⁽²⁾ by the attraction of gold placed before his eyes Æsculapius resuscitated

¹ This poet died at 86, while assisting at a gymnastic exhibition. He gently expired reclining on the knees of his disciple Theoxenes. Chappelle has doubtless forgotten this peaceful death of the poet, when following a copious repast with Bachaumont, he responds to the servant who is astonished at seeing both men in tears "Alas! we weep the famous poet Pindar, who was assassinated in the flower of his age, by ignorant doctors."

As 86 years may be considered youthful to some minds, and Pindar had no medical attendance, the conclusion is obvious.

² Plato reproaches Pindar, in his *Republic*, of

tated a mortal, already dead.⁽¹⁾ Suddenly Jupiter launched on them his fiery shafts, and both were pierced through, and the burning thunder-bolt struck them dead.

accusing the son of Apollo of receiving a salary for giving life to the dead, and that his avarice was punished by Jupiter. It is in fact, more logical to admit, with the majority of authors, that the Ruler of Olympus only acted on the solicitation of Pluto, who was uneasy lest his empire might be prejudiced, owing to the skill of Æsculapius. The truth is, since this exemplary punishment, no physician has risked the raising of the dead. The following lines evidence how Seneca treats this fiction in his "Works of Apollo:"

To please Diana, Apollo revived Hippolytus,
Forcing e'en inflexible Destiny to bend;
Snatching the body out of Death's clutches.
Then from Acheron, Pluto—barbarous monarch,
With blow of trident, opened Hell's portals
And on a whirlwind of sulphur and pitch
Raised his voice Heavenwards in grim complaining:

"Is this done, and thou consenting, ungrateful Jupiter?

Art not contented with thine own mission?
Audacious Apollo, superb in his art,
Comes he to declare on me war on thy part?
Ah! could I believe this!" All nature trembled
At this menacing cry, blood-curdling and frightful;

But Jupiter's smile soon cleared up the air.
"King of Hell," cried he, "cease thy alarm;
For the one, Æsculapius has ta'en from thy darkness,
His disciples shall send thee victims unnumbered."

Yet, to calm the soul of his angry brother,
Jupiter cast his dread bolt at Apollo.
The stroke was certain, and in burning thunder
The God of Health was crushed into powder.

¹ The version of Virgil, derived from the "Æneid," is less malicious:

"Apollo's powerful art restoring life,
Jupiter, angry that such a practice
Upset his law, by reviving mortals,
Plunged the inventor into the state
From which Apollo freed Hippolytus."

Mortal learn to know thyself; let thy desires be those of a man, that they may conform to thy destiny.

* * *

ARISTOPHANES (Greek comic poet, 5th century B. C.).⁽¹⁾

PLUTUS (A COMEDY).

Blepsideme: Is it not necessary to go seek a physician?

Chremyle: Physicians in Athens! There is no art without salary.⁽²⁾

Blepsideme: Seek well for one!

Chremyle: There is not a single one in the city.

Blepsideme: What to do, then, I know not!

Chremyle: I have well reflected on the matter, and 'tis best we make Plutus sleep in the Temple of Æsculapius.⁽³⁾

The wife of Chremyle: So the God did not come?

Carion: He tarried not; and, when near us—O, laughable farce!—my belly, swollen like a wind-filled bladder, emitted a most melodious and sonorous sound.

The wife of Chremyle: The God of

1 Physicians were often ridiculed in Grecian comedy. Antiphanes, and afterwards Philetærus, seemed to have represented a kind of Sganarelle in their Æsculapius. The same Antiphanes, Aristophon and Philemon, composed pieces entitled "Iatros, or 'the Doctor,'" and, after a portion of his "Physician," Theophilus placed on the stage some medical characters similar to those that Cervantes attached to Sancho Panza, Governor of Barataria.

2 At Athens, physicians only received a very moderate salary; so that, usually, skilled medical men practiced their art in other more liberal cities.

3 Patients were carried to the temple of Æsculapius to pass the night, where, it was believed, they were visited by the God (who was not seen

Health himself, no doubt, indulged in smiling?)

Carion: No; but Iaso,⁽¹⁾ who accompanied the God, blushed at the immodest noise, and Panacea⁽²⁾ turned and held her nose; for the sounds had not the smell of roses.

The wife of Chremyle: Yes; but the God?

Carion: He indeed paid not the least attention to the sound.

The wife of Chremyle: He is then a very boorish God?

Carion: I do not say that; but he is in the habit of even tasting excrements.⁽³⁾

* * *

PHILEMON (Greek comic poet, 3d century B.C.).

THE SICILIAN (COMEDY).

It is easy for men to give advice, but difficult for one's self to follow it; we have

on account of the darkness), and their return to health thus accomplished.

1 Iaso was the daughter of Æsculapius and a deity of healing among the Greeks.

2 Panacea was another daughter of Æsculapius

3 Aristophanes calls Æsculapius "Eat dung." The Scholiasts thus explain his meaning: "It is said that the physicians were then paid for examining human dejections and the urine, and that that prince of physicians, Hippocrates, tasted the patient's excrement to know whether the cure was made."

Cornelius Agrippa, in his "Uncertainty and Vanity of the Sciences and Arts," thus narrates one of his kind of amenities: "Ordinarily physicians are infected and capable of carrying contagion. Oh, the villainous race! Washed in urine, perfumed with ordure, always hovering between chamber pot and closet, they are beyond comparison filthy; stinking and more repulsive than even midwives, and that is saying but little."

an example in physicians: for their patients they order a severe regimen, for themselves, on going to bed, they do all that which they have forbidden others. Disease and the treatment of disease are two different things.

Look around you: there is not a doctor who desires the health of his friends, not a soldier who desires peace for his country.

Only the doctor and the judge have the right to inflict the death penalty without receiving the same.⁽¹⁾ (Stobaeus, *Florilegium*.)

What is this man?

A doctor.

By Jupiter! a doctor must be very sick when all the world is well.⁽²⁾

* * *

PLATO (Greek philosopher, 4th century B.C.).

THE LAWS (DIALOGUE NINTH).

Oh, fool! Thou didst not care for the disease, but gavest him a course of instruction as though he needed not a cure but rather for himself to become a physician.

THE REPUBLIC (THIRD BOOK).

Herodicus⁽³⁾ was master of the gym-

¹ This is the remark of Mazarinade, "Catechisme des courtisans de la cour de Mazarin," 1649:

Who is this doctor?

He is an honorable executioner.

² In a comedy played at Venice towards the close of the sixteenth century, called the "Veritaraminga," a reminiscence of this passage is found, where the doctor and apothecary rejoice at the decadence of public morals, as it benefits them.

³ Herodicus had Hippocrates for a disciple, but the latter did not favor his master's methods,

nasium, and became a valetudinarian; he made of medicine and gymnastics an admixture that served not only to torment himself, but many after him.

In what way?

By managing to secure a slow death; for, as his malady was mortal, he followed it step by step without the power to cure, neglecting all to care for himself, devoured by inquietude if deviating from his set diet, so that by the force of his art he reached a ripe old age by a life of horrible agony. His art then rendered him good service.

PLATO (continued).

The best indication of bad laws and an intemperate community is to find gathered together many lawyers and many doctors.

IMITATION.

"When I meet at each step a patient," Arsecilas the Scythian did say,
I at once know 'tis very unhealthy, where they're
so many doctors to pay.
Full well I know too, or imagine, where so many
are given to vice,
That the people are wholly immoral and lawyers
not overly nice."

PLATO (continued).

Plato says that only physicians are permitted to lie at liberty when our health depends on vanity and the falsity of their medical promises. (Montaigne, *Essays*, Book IV., Chapter xxxvii.)

Plato regarded medicine as prejudicial to the individual as to society. (*Le Mercure*, February, 1772.)

Socrates, according to Plato, in the Third Book, *De Regno*,⁽¹⁾ felicitated an ig-

for he remarks: "In seeking to subdue the fatigue which causes a disease, by another malady, we often aggravate the condition of the affection without easing it."

¹ The chapter "De Regno" does not exist in

norant painter that he had abandoned an art which exposed his faults to the eyes of the multitude, to embrace medicine, that put his blunders out of sight and covered them with from five to six feet of earth. (Leroy, *Le Charlatanisme demasque*.)

* * *

ÆSCHINES (Greek orator, 4th century B.C.).

TO ÆSCULAPIUS.

I know the impotence of human art,
And place in Heaven high mine only hope.
From Athens I at once shall make a start
And for thine woods, (1) O! Æsculapius, grope.
For a whole year mine abscess I've endured;
In three months' time, I know, I shall be cured.

* * *

MENANDER (Greek comic poet, 3d century B.C.).

To employ a blabbing physician is to gain a worse malady than the one we have.

That which finished me was a consultation of physicians whom my doctor called to assist him. I succumbed to their number. (2)

the works of Plato. This idea seems to have originated with Nicocles. Petrarch, in his "Invectives," likewise attributes this saying to Socrates.

1 "This was a true privileged hospital, for in it no one died," etc. (Pausanias, ii., 26.)

2 It is said that the Emperor Hadrian died of a flux at the age of sixty-two, and made the same remark, *i.e.*, "It is the great number of doctors that killed me," so that the paternity of this epigram is wrongly attributed to this source. Another ancient, seeing several physicians around the bed of a dying man, exclaimed: "Behold the vultures around the carrion!"

Casimir Delavigne parodied a celebrated apostrophe of Horace against physicians in his "Comedians," *Act I, Scene II*:

Granville: The doctors of this place have

IMITATION.

Pourquoi vous etonner Julie,
Qu'un peu de fièvre et de mélancolie,
Ait pu mettre en cinq jours Amarante au tombeau?
Avec ce pénétrant génie
Qui connaît le plus fin de la philosophie,
Pourquoi demeurer court d'ans un chemin si beau,
Et douter du sujet de ce malheur funeste?
Cessez de vous en prendre aux innocens destins;
La cause en est trop manifeste,
Elle avoit quatre medecins.

—BORDELON, *Diversitez*, curieuse, 1699.

M.P., being extremely ill, saw at his bedside several physicians who had been called, *pro forma*, in consultation, and remarked that he felt like a soldier condemned by a court martial; then, addressing the doctor who seemed to him most skilful among the number, he said: "To you, Monsieur, I confide the task of execution, if it is to be" (*Bordelon*).

* * *

NICOCLES (Greek poet, 4th century B.C.).

TO VALERIUS MAXIMUS.

Physicians are happy because the sun lights up their successes and the earth hides their mistakes. (1) (Stobæus, *Eclog. Serm.*, cxlvi.)

treated him—God knows how; there were three physicians, and, moreover—

Pembroke: Poor man! how could he contend against three?

Granville: Oh, he died!

1 This epigram is analogous to that which several authors put into the mouth of Socrates, and has often been reproduced since Beaumarchais repeated it in "Le Barbier de Seville," act ii., scene 13:

Bartholow: An art in which sunlight honors each success.

The Count: In which earth hides each mournful blunder.

IMITATION.

Between professions, sure,
That of medicine take;
The sun shines on a cure,
Earth hides each mistake.

* * *

ATHENÆUS (Greek writer, 3rd century B. C.).

THE BANQUET OF SAVANTS.

By Minerva! Menecrates of Syracuse had not such boastfulness⁽¹⁾ as he who has been surnamed Jupiter, and who was so proud in saying that by his medical art he was arbiter of the lives of men. He required of those he treated for diseases regarded as incurable,⁽²⁾ to engage by written contract, to serve him as his slaves when they were cured, and really, these subjects never left him afterwards. Such, among others, was Nicostratus, of Argos, who followed him as Hercules after being cured. Ehippus mentions this in his "Peltaste," but "Menecrates said that he was a God, and Nicostratus, of Argos, that he was another Hercules."

Another of the subjects cured, took the chlamys and rod of Mercury; another assumed winged heels and pinions like unto the God, like unto Nicagoras, of Zela, who was the tyrant of his country,

1 Athenæus speaks here of the pride of a certain cook who boasted that he had found a method of rendering himself immortal by bringing the dead to life with the odor of his dishes alone.

2 The text says *sacrees*, because all incurable diseases were regarded, in times of antiquity, as evils attributed to divine wrath. Epilepsy was among the sacred diseases, and was often simulated, as at the present day, for invoking the charity and pity of the passer. Menecrates, without doubt, attracted such malingers, who easily imposed on his egotistical credulity and knew how to work the physician to their profit.

according to Batton, in his account of the tyrants of Ephesus.

Hegesander reports that Menecrates, before curing Astycreon made him take the name of Apollo. Another patient, who was likewise treated successfully, took the costume of Æsculapius, and accompanied the charlatan Menecrates in his wanderings. As to Menecrates himself, he went by the name of Jupiter, and wore a purple robe, with a crown of gold upon his head, and a scepter in his hand, and paraded about with his conclave of spurious divinities. One day he wrote to Philip, King of Macedon, as follows:

"Menecrates Jupiter, to King Philip, greeting!"

Thou art King of Macedon, and I am King of Medicine. Thou canst make men in health perish when thou desireth. I can save the sick, guarantee to cure all disease up to the extremity of old age. Those who are well, if they follow my orders live for ever. If thou hast soldiers to guard thy person and life, I have for protectors, those I have snatched from the jaws of death. For, it is I, Jupiter, who giveth life."

King Philip responded to this fool quack doctor in these words:

"Philip, to Menecrates, greeting and better sense!"⁽¹⁾

Menecrates wrote in about the same terms to Archidamus, King of Lacedæmonia, and to others on the occasion, never forgetting to omit his self assumed title of Jupiter.

Philip one day invited this doctor to dinner, together with his retinue of so-

1 It is also said that the King added that Menecrates "might" go to Anticyra, the classical land of Hellebore, that plant having the reputation of curing insanity.

called Gods. The quack was placed upon a throne ornamented in the greatest magnificence, and with all the mock ceremony possible. A table was placed before him, on which were all the first fruits of the season and delicious cooked meats, but, these were only served to the King's convivial companions, who were in the joke; the servants only allowed Menecrates and his troupe of Gods to smell the odor from the empty cups used in libations; finally, the quack Jupiter Menecrates, finding himself the laughing stock of the King's company, flew away from the repast with his patients. Alexis recalls the memory of Menecrates in his *Minos*.

* * *

HEDYLE (3d century B. C.).⁽¹⁾

EPIGRAM.

Agis had not given a clyster to Aristagoras, and had not even felt his pulse, for no sooner had he entered the sick room than the spirit of Aristagoras departed. Is aconite more powerful than the presence of Agis? Ye who make funeral biers, cover Agis with flowers and crowns.

* * *

STRATON (2d century B. C.).

EPIGRAM.

The physician Capiton, laved the eyes of Chryses with an elixir. Before, he saw a tower at eight stadiums distance, at one stadium he saw a man; at twelve cubits he saw a quail; he saw a louse at a hand's distance. Now, he could not see a town at one stadium's distance; at a few yards he could not perceive a light house; he saw a horse

¹ These citations from Hedyle, Straton, Nicarque, Macedonius, Agathias, Collicater and Lucille, are derived from the "Greek Anthology."

at two hands' distance; and in place of seeing a quail at a few cubits, he could not even note an ostrich. Had he continued his physician's remedy, he could not have perceived even an elephant standing before him.

* * *

NICARQUE (2d century B. C.).

EPIGRAM.

What do you ask passers bye? I demand who are those here interred under these tombs? These are all patients of Zopyrus, those whom he has put out of the way of sunlight; here lie Damis, Aristotle, Demetrius, Arcesilas, Sostratus and many others. Having for a healing rod a club, and sandals out at heels, for the wings of Mercury, he leads all those he treats to Hell.

ON RECTAL INJECTIONS.

A physician suffocated an old woman with a rectal injection; none knew why she died, but she departed promptly, for the noise of the clyster was still in her family's ears when they placed a wreath on her grave, and prepared the burned meats for the funeral repast.

Phedon gave me neither injections nor inunctions; but, having a fever, I recalled his name and now lie here dead.

IMITATION.

Phedon, in my fever which was slight,
Neither a drink nor clyster warm applied;
But Phedon's name set my heart in affright,
And, even without seeing him, I died.

—Saint Simon.

THE ORTHOPEDIST.

Socles having promised to straighten out the hump-backed Diodorus, placed three heavy stones on the patient's dorsal spine. Crushed beneath the weight Dio-

dorus died; but, he was now straighter than a rule.

IMITATION.

Socles promised Diodorus to relieve him of his hump,
And placed four very heavy stones upon his spinal bump;
Diodorus perished, overloaded with this weight;
Socles kept his promise; the hump was straight.
—*Adaptation of Chopin.*

AGAINST THE PHYSICIAN SIMON.

If thou hast an enemy Dionysius, call not for the vengeance of Isis ⁽¹⁾ nor of Harpocrates, nor any other divinity that deprives one of sight, but call in the physician Simon, for Simon can avenge thee as the Gods.

IMITATION.

Hast thou an enemy? Invoke not of Isis her wrath;
Nor call on Harpocrates, who, too, inflicts blindness.
Call in Doctor Simon, the guide for Death's path,
He'll give you vengeance, with his killing kindness.

THE HAPPY DEAD MAN.

In a surgical operation Agelaus butchered Acestorides. "If he had lived," said the physician, "he would, unfortunately, have always been lame."

IMITATION.

Under the scalpel of a master surgeon,
A patient trembling but all hopeful came.
The victim died. "How happy!" cried the doctor,
"For had he lived, he surely had been lame."

EPIGRAMS.

The physician Alexis had visited five patients; he prescribed for each of the five a wash, a bolus and a friction; all the five lived but that single night, for there was

only one remedy, one grave-digger, one funeral, one tomb and one lamentation.

Before rubbing his eyes with the oculist's collyrium, the unfortunate Damostratus said farewell to the sacred light of day, for Dion never failed in his art. Not only had he blinded Jupiter, but he had even robbed the statue erected to the latter of its glass eyes.⁽¹⁾

The astrologer Diophantes announced⁽²⁾ to the physician Hermogenes that he had not more than nine months to live, and the doctor only laughed and exclaimed: "Why delay nine months? Knowest not that even my art is more expeditious?" As he spoke he extended his hand and merely touched the astrologer's pulse. Diophantes immediately expired in convulsions.

Great Cæsar! The fable tells us how in other days Eurystheus sent Hercules to the God of Death; now it is I who send the physician Menophanes. Therefore, we no longer say Menophanes, but Doctor Eurystheus.

Yesterday the physician Marcus touched the statue of Jupiter, and although it was carved in marble, though being Jupiter, it passed away to-day, the same as all the other of this doctor's patients.

Marcus heri medicus tetigit lapidemque Jovemque;
Ipse hodie effertur Jupiter, iste lapis.

IMITATION.

Marcus, physician, yesterday touched Jupiter carved in stone;
To-day, both stone and Jupiter a joint burial own.

* * *

¹ These eyes were not formed of glass, but rather of precious and sparkling stones.

² One of the physicians of the Emperor Hadrian.

¹ Isis was supposed to have the power of inflicting blindness. See Ovid "De Ponto" I, 51.

PLUTARCH (2d century B.C.).

From the "Lives of Illustrious Men."

CATO THE CENSOR (his opinion of medicine).

Cato was not only the enemy of Greek philosophers, but likewise held as suspects those who practiced medicine; and he had, no doubt, heard of the response of Hippocrates to the King of Persia, who had offered many talents to the great physician to come and treat him at his Court, and to whom the physician said that he never treated barbarians who were the enemies of the Greeks. Cato thought this a reflection applicable to all doctors, and warned his son to avoid them. He composed a work on medicine for treating the sick in his own household, and always laid down rules of diet for those afflicted,⁽¹⁾ although this regimen was never very severe. He nourished them on herbs,

I Cato, who criticises doctors so immoderately, himself pretended to cure all diseases with curious remedies, which he recommended in all seriousness in his "Rural Economy." Pliny, also, desired his friends to avoid doctors, but to take the medicines he prescribed. In later ages we see Montaigne and Madam Sevigne fall into the same pit of inconsistency.

Among Cato's marvellous remedies, *cabbage* plays a leading part, *i. e., remedies prepared with cabbage*. "If at meals you desire to eat largely and with appetite, eat cabbage with vinegar—as much as you may desire—and even after the meal eat five cabbage leaves, and you will still feel as though you had not eaten nor taken drink; and you can commence to drink again at your pleasure." He recommends the juice from boiled cabbage, and even the cabbage itself, in gastric disorders; in colic, palpitation of heart, gout, deafness, urinary retention, and in diseases of the liver and lungs. "Applied in cataplasms to wounds and tumors, it will cleanse all ulcerations and cure without pain. It will cause abscesses to open, clean and cure infected wounds and cancers that have defied all other remedies. Contusions,

duck's flesh, ring doves and rabbits; he claimed this nourishment easy to digest by weak persons, having no other inconvenience than to make them talk in their sleep in their dreams; with this treatment he claimed to have preserved his own health, as well as those around him. But, in reality, he was not so successful in his treatment as he claims, inasmuch as he lost his wife and son. For himself, he was healthy and robust, and long preserved physical vigor; at a very advanced age he often cohabited with his wife, for he married late in life a young girl of very disproportionate age.

DION—DEATH OF DIONYSIUS.

Dion fell ill, and his end appeared near; Dion desired to speak a word in favor of the children he had had by Aristomachus; but the physicians, in order to pay court to young Dionysius, who was to succeed his father, left no time for Dion to speak. The tyrant, according to Timæus, demanded a soporific; such a strong one was given that all his senses were benumbed, and he promptly entered into the sleep that knows no waking.

ANTHONY XXIX.

Magnificent presents made by the son of Anthony to the physician Philotas.

The physician Philotas, of Amphisssa, was admitted to the friendship of the eldest son of Fulvia by M. Anthony, and was on such terms of friendship that he sat at the young man's table among his other ac-

pustules and eruptions are cured by applications of boiled cabbage. It is a veritable panacea."

Again, in another section, Cato says: "Preserve the urine of a person who has eaten cabbage, warm it carefully and use it for a bath for a sick person; it is a sure cure for disease. Children of feeble constitution laved in cabbage urine will

quaintances, when the latter did not dine with his father. One evening, at a convivial gathering, a young physician was also admitted to the table, who disturbed all the guests with his loquacity. Philotas closed the young doctor's mouth by the following sophism: "It is necessary," said he, "to give cold water to a man who has fever; now, all men have fever to a certain degree; it is necessary, then, to give *water* to all men having fever."

The young physician was struck dumb by this sophistry,⁽²⁾ and young Anthony was so charmed at his embarrassment and laughed with all his heart, and exclaimed, "Philotas, take all that's here!" and opened a closet filled with superb vessels of silver. Philotas, not thinking a boy of that age could make gifts of so great value, merely thanked the young man for his good will. The next day came to the house of Philotas an officer of Anthony's Court, who brought in this great present and proceeded to weigh the silver to see that none was missing. Philotas, who feared to be blamed if he received such a gift from the young man, persistently refused to accept, when the officer said: "What an innocent! Do you hesitate to accept such a trifle? Do you not know that it is Anthony's son who sends the gift, and that he could give you the same amount of gold vessels without being over-generous? True, if you prefer to receive the value of this plate in money it may be done, for it is possible the boy's father may desire to preserve some of these antique vases, that are much sought after on ac-

become robust for ever after, and those having feeble sight and weak eyes will find in this remedy an excellent collyrium. Headaches disappear when the forehead is bathed in cabbage urine," etc., etc.

2 This has very little logic.

count of the beauty of their workmanship." This story has been narrated to me by my grandsire, who had often heard Philotas relate the same.

* * *

LUCIAN (120-200 A.D.).

EPIGRAM.

A physician sent his son to me to learn *belle lettres*, whence he came to know those verses from Homer so much used by grammarians:

"The Muses sang in wrath, making a thousand misfortunes,
Sending to realms Plutonic many a soul most valiant."

The father heard these lines and no longer sent his son to school; and, one day meeting me, he said: "My son can learn all that from me; in fact, I send more souls to Pluto than the Muses. I do not need a grammarian in my family.

LATIN IMITATION.⁽¹⁾

Ad me grammaticam natum qui disceret artem,
Instructus medica miserat arte pater.
At puer didicit, "Refer iram" et "Mille dolores
Fecit," et bis junctus qui quoque versus erat:
"Præstantes multas animas sub Tartara misit?"
Non pater ad ludum mittit. ut ante, meum.
Mox que ubi me vidit: "Tibi gratia, dixit,
amice;
Me doctore, potest dicere natus idem.
Ipse animas egomet multas sub Tartara mitto;
Grammatici neque an id posco docentis opem."

DIALOGUE OF THE GODS.

DIALOGUE 14TH.—*Dispute between Æsculapius and Hercules regarding pre-audience.*

Characters: JUPITER, HERCULES, ÆSCULAPIUS.

Jupiter:

Finish as soon as 'tis possible; ye weary my brain.

1 The translation into Latin verse is by Vavasour.

What! will ye not go to the banquet ready
in waiting?

See that brilliant circle of Gods and likewise
of demigods!

Yet, as two fools, ye keep ever disputing.

Hercules:

What wouldst thou, father, that a low charlatan

Take place before me?

Æsculapius:

How? I trust mine rights in this place are
worth more than thine!

Hercules:

Of what rights speakest thou? I cannot agree:
For Jupiter, knowing the laws thou transgressed,⁽¹⁾

Punished thee with his withering thunderbolt.

And, in compassion rather than equity,
Raised thee unworthy one, to ranks immortal.

Can this be thine privilege?

Æsculapius:

To the eyes of great Hercules my sad taking-off
seems amusing!

Dost not remember that on Mt. Ætna thou
wert once thrown?

That was thine funeral pyre.

Hercules:

Insolent! Think ye that I, son of the master
of thunder,

I, of unfortunate mortals known as a deity,
I, whose strong arm has subdued a hundred
grim monsters

And bowed their heads low for their hideous
crimes.

That I, should be placed on a par with a
charlatan,

An empiric practicing in public places,
Acting as mountebank with feet and hands
nimble,

Selling at low price his balms, called all sovereign;

To our poor sick ones rendering some useful
service,

The same as are given by all generous mortals?

Æsculapius:

I find, in truth, thine discourse to be marvelous.

¹ Allusion is here made to raising Hippolytus from the dead.

When thou first entered Heaven's bright portals,

With Centaur Nessus' thrice-fatal tunic,
And funeral pyre by thineself lighted,
Twice hadst thou by death's fires been consumed.

Ingrate! And was it not mine friendly hand
That called thee from death to life eternal?
Yes; but for me, who but a poor surgeon am,
Spreading my benefits to all human races.

Fevers and pains, of all kinds and manners,
Withdraw at mine instance their hideous cohorts;

I have never denied mine honored employment,

Nor have I been like a slave as hast thou,
Under the purple hiding mine talents;
In rich Lydias' palace lingering in dalliance,
Turning a spindle with languorous fingers.
Never was I so ridiculous a lover,
Nor bowed I humbly at the feet of Omphales
With forehead bruised with the gold of her sandals!

One ne'er saw me shiver with horrors!

One ne'er saw me, in excess of anger,
Slaughter at one time children and mother!

Hercules:

Hold thine peace, beast, with tongue of a viper!

Woe be to thee! for with my arm vigorous,
Raised, though all trembling, high unto heaven,

To fall first on thine head.
Go! Immortality prevents but slightly
Breaking thine neck and the bones of thine body.

I'd wager besides thine protector Apollo,
Patron of doctors, no matter what's done,
Would restore anew thine vile, wicked carcass.

Jupiter:

Cease, brawlers, I order, or far from this banquet

I'll force ye to carry such wearisome quarrels.
Æsculapius first takes his seat at mine table,
Since he first died, that right is most valid.

TRAGODOPODAGRA (drama).

The Gout: What mortal on earth fails
to recognize me, the Gout? King of all
pains, an invincible sovereign. No vapors

of incense can calm my violence, neither blood sacrifices spread upon warming braziers, nor temples in which are suspended richest of offerings. Pean with his remedies cannot triumph over me though he be physician to the Gods of Heaven, nor can Æsculapius the son of Phebus subdue me. Since humanity had birth, men have had the audacity to seek to destroy my power by using offensive remedies against me. A thousand artifices have been used to injure me. One used hemp and plantain, another prescribed smallage, another lettuce leaves, and still another wild purslane; some used leeks, pond weeds, stinging nettle, or even the weeds that flourish on our marshes; some advised cooked parsnips, peach leaves, hyosciamus, poppies, onions, pomegranates, flea-wort, hellebore, niter, fenugreek infused in wine, frog spawn, gum cypress, barley flower, boiled cabbage, salted pickles, sheep dung, human excrement, bean flour; others, again, gave cooked toads, weasels, lizards, cats, frogs, hyenas, musk deer and foxes. What metals has not man essayed? What juice has he not tried? He has utilized the bones of all known animals, their nerves, skin, flesh, fat, blood, urine and milk. Some have taken remedies four times, others eight times. Some have been purified before taking these sacred potions; some have abused themselves by the charms bought from impostors; a third and ignorant class is trapped by the Jew quacks; and there is a last kind that invoke and implore the power of true medicine. As for myself, I make the world weep, and am most incited against those who use such remedies in their endeavors to chase me away. As for those who resist not, I have a more kindly feeling, and treat them less severely. Those initiated in my mysteries learn to say, above all,

good words for me, and charm others with joyous praises of the pangs I inflict. All the healthy world laughs and applauds when they see me carried to the baths.

I am that Atia of whom Homer speaks, he who walks on men's heads with delicate toes; the vulgar call me Gout, because I catch them by the feet.⁽¹⁾ I have tamed more than one mortal hero; sages are not ignorant of the fact that the light-footed Priam has become Priam the gouty-toed. A foot disease carried off the great Achilles, son of Peleus. Bellerophon was one of my victims. The Sovereign of Thebes, Ædipus, had swollen feet. Plisthines, one of the Pelopides, was gouty as well as commander of the fleet. Another chief of the Thessalians, Podarces, although gouty-toed, took command of the ships when Protesilas perished in the naval combat. It is I, the Gout, who killed the Sovereign of Ithiaca, that mighty Ulysses, son of Læertes. Unfortunate mortals, do not rejoice in your insolence, but quietly submit to the just punishment I choose to inflict.

Chorus of Doctors: We are the Syrians, born at Damascus; pressed by hunger and misery, we wander o'er earth and waters. We know an ointment, a gift paternal, with which we ease those who are gouty.

The Gout: Of what is this ointment composed? How is it prepared?

A Physician: An oath, most solemnly taken, will not permit us to divulge the secret. Our father, in dying, recommended as his last wish that we reveal not the ingredients of this remedy—an agent that will bring your cruel pains to terms.

The Gout: What! Miserable villains! there is not in this whole world a remedy that can constrain my powers. Make your

¹ The word *podagra*, in Greek, really signifies the trap in which the animal is caught by the feet.

healing contracts, and we shall see whether my fires or your remedy is strongest. Come, griping pains, from your sombre concealment; fly to me, death-shadows, ye dear companions of my orgies! Catch this man by his great toes; penetrate his heel pieces; spread thine acrid humors under his knee joints; bend his fingers like the willows in a basket.

The Gouty Pains: We have executed your orders! They are overthrown and prostrate! Ah! the unfortunates, how they utter lamentable cries! Our very approach has twisted their limbs with tortures.

The Gout: Go! quackish strangers, see now whether your ointment will remedy your own attack. If it will really oppose my fury, I shall abandon the earth; I will burst my own entrails and plunge alone into the deepest gulf of Tartarus, unknown and invisible.

The Physician: Alas! The ointment applied does not diminish the hellish fires of the pain.

The Gouty Patient: Oh! great God! I am pierced through and through. I am dying! an invisible power has destroyed me. The lightning of Jupiter is not as terrible in its effects; the ships on the raging sea are not tossed about with so much fury, and the whirlwinds of the tempest are less impetuous. I am bitten by the cruel tooth of Cerebus! The venom of a viper seems to devour me! Is this the subtle poison from the tunic of the Centaur? Have pity on me, great Deity, this ointment is not my make. It is not a remedy that can stay your potent course, and my very sufferings proclaim you to be victorious over all mortals.

The Gout: Cease, cruel tortures! moderate your pains! When this patient repents having dared to defy me, all should

know that, save among the Divinities, I am uncontrollable and vastly superior to all mankind's remedies.

* * *

DION CASSIUS (155 to 240 A.D.).

ROMAN HISTORY.⁽¹⁾

Augustus was reduced by disease to such extremities that he could no longer administer his most urgent affairs. In his necessity he called in a physician named Antonius Musa, who restored his health with certain beverages and cold baths, and Cæsar rewarded this doctor by giving him a large sum of money and the right to wear a gold ring, because the physician had served him freely and only from love for his majesty; and thus Cæsar gave the prerogative of honor to all those that thereafter made medicine a profession. Although this physician had the skill, or perhaps good fortune, to make so good and favorable a cure,—I might add perhaps the Gods assisted him,—all might have gone well; but, some time afterwards, Marcellus⁽²⁾ called him in to treat his malady, and died, although he was treated precisely in the same manner as Cæsar Augustus.

* * *

¹ Translated from the Greek into Old French by Anthoyne Canque, 1597 A.D.

² The statue raised in the public place to Antonius Musa, in honor of his having cured Augustus, was torn down after the Emperor's nephew had been killed by the same doctor. At least the populace held Musa responsible for the death of Marcellus; but, notwithstanding the unjust insinuation of Dion Cassius, this newly-freed and ignorant slave, Musa, like the majority of Roman physicians, was, without doubt, as free from the charge of killing Marcellus as he was of curing his uncle Cæsar Augustus.

DIOGENES LÆRTIUS (Epicurean philosopher, 200 A.D.).

Lives of the most Illustrious Philosophers of Antiquity.

EMPEDOCLES.

The physician Acron prayed the Consul to grant him a place on which to erect a monument to his father, whom he claimed was the greatest doctor ever known. Empedocles prevented the granting of this request, as much from motives of reason as by his remarks: "What inscription would you have?" he demanded of the doctor. "What would you carve on the monument, an epitaph? Would it read, 'Acron, the most *eminent* of physicians, son of an *eminent* father, is interred upon this rocky *eminence*, the most *eminent* point among his country's *eminences*.' " Some translate the second verse, "This *eminent* tomb contains an *eminent* head."⁽¹⁾

HERACLITUS.

He became so misanthropic that he retired to the woods, where he passed his life in nourishing himself on roots and herbs. He contracted dropsy in time, which obliged him to return to Ephesus, where he demanded, while scoffing the physicians, that they should change his rain into a drought.⁽²⁾ Not being satisfied with their replies, he tried to cure himself:

1 The pith of this epigram rendered into English is hidden in the Greek word *acron*, which signifies eminent, and is repeated as a play upon words several times. This irony was very applicable to Acron, who was proud and boastful, and called himself, in alluding to his name, the most eminent of physicians.

2 This enigmatical style was habitual with Heraclitus, and obtained for him the surname of the Gloomy Philosopher. See his letter to Amphidamas before mentioned.

he entered a stable and buried himself in a pile of cow dung, hoping that the heat would evaporate the water through the pores of his skin and relieve the effusion. He experienced the inutility of this effort and died in his sixtieth year. Hermippus reported that he consulted the doctors in order to find out whether there was not some method to pump out the water from his intestines, and that he was answered that no such procedure was known; that he then went out into the sun and ordered his children to cover his body with fresh cow dung; and that the treatment weakened him to such an extent that he died three days after. Neanthes of Cyzicus says, on the contrary, that, not being able to draw himself from the dung heap, he died there and was eaten by dogs.

EPICURUS.⁽¹⁾

It is said that Aristotle, in his youth, dissipated all his patrimony in debauchery, and was reduced to enlist as a soldier in order to live, and he played the charlatan by selling antidotes to his comrades on the march.

DIOGENES, THE CYNIC.

The rake Didymon was occupied in curing the eyes of a young girl. Diogenes said to him: "Take care, while treating her eyeball, you do not wound some other part."⁽²⁾

Having seen an ex wrestler who was practicing medicine, he asked him by what

1 This philosopher composed three books *against doctors*, not forgiving them for the long sufferings he had endured from a disease of the urinary organs, of which he finally died. The same spitefulness is evident in the works of J. J. Rousseau, who had the same malady and attacked physicians for a similar reason.

2 This raillery is upon the equivalents of the two words signifying eyeball and girl. Diogenes

right he overcame those at present who formerly vanquished him.

IMITATION.

L'Athelete Devenu Medecin.

Tonjours vaincu rosse, meprise, malheureux,
Un athelete prefeere a cet art dangereux
Celui de medecin que sans risque il exerce.
Diogenes lui dit "T'es, tu pas fait docteur
Pour te mieux assurer d'etendre a la renverse
Ceux qui te renversaient tant que tu fus luteur?"

* * *

PLOTINIS (Platonic philosopher, 205-270 A.D.).

PENSEE.

Medicine is the principle of errors.

* * *

BABRIUS (3d century Christian Era).

Fables.

THE MEDICAL FROG.

A frog that dwelt in the mire near a swampy pool once wandered out on the solid earth and told every animal it met that it was a great physician and knew every remedy in the world, being even a greater doctor than Apollo, who lived on Olympus and medicated the Gods. "How!" said a fox whom it met, "you say you can cure others—you, who always limp along and cannot cure yourself. Pah!"

THE IGNORANT DOCTOR.

There was once a doctor who, like many of his craft, did not understand his trade, but who remarked to each of his patients: "Have courage! I will save you! The disease is long, but you will be cured." Once this medical pretender saw a very

intended to hint that the *route* and physician Didymon sought to use the medical benefits he conferred on the girl as an excuse to ruin her.

sick man, and said to him: "Make your will! You are dying. I do not desire to abuse your confidence nor to deceive you, but if you live until to-morrow you will last no longer." This he remarked, and returned to visit the patient no more. Some time after the patient, recovering from the attack, went out for a walk, still pale and just able to stand. The physician met him and said, "Good day, old friend, how goes it in Hell?" The former sick man smiled and calmly responded: "Everything is quiet there for they drink of Lethe's waters.(!) Yet recently Pluto and his wife were abusing earthly doctors, whom they said were curing too many patients. They had the names of some of these physicians on the list, and your name was among the first; but, seized with fear on your account, I rushed forward and declared to them that any one who claimed you were a doctor was guilty of pure calumny."

* * *

HIEROCLES (Platonic philosopher, 5th century Christian Era).

FACETIA.

A scholar meeting a physician said: "I beg your pardon that I am not sick."

A man coming across a doctor while travelling, hid behind a wall. Some one asking his motive, he replied: "It is so long since I have been ill that I blush on seeing a physician."

A peasant laughed in his sleeve on seeing a physician examine the silver coin he gave him as fee with his spectacles on, and leave off his glasses while he examined the urine in the chamber.

* * *

I A river in Hell whose waters bring oblivion.

MACEDONIUS (6th century Christian Era).

THE DOCTOR'S MISTAKE.

Yesterday, I was sick. A physician, not an amiable personage, approached my bed and forbade me to drink a cup of nectar; he prescribed that I should drink only water; he was an ignoramus, who knew not that Homer⁽¹⁾ has said "*Wine is the strength and health of mortals.*"

I received, yesterday, a call,
From a doctor who slayeth all.
Nectar he forbade me to take,
Only water my thirst to slake—
Forgetting that old Homer states,
"Wine cheers and regenerates."

* * *

AGATHIAS (Greek historian, 6th century Christian Era).

EPIGRAM.

Alcimenēs was tormented by the fever; his voice was rough and harsh; his lungs were as though pierced through by swords; and an asthma oppressed his respiration. Soon arrived Callignotus, of Cos, a sententious physician, filled with the science of Æsculapius, apt at drawing a prognosis from symptoms, and foreseeing nothing more than what happened. He examined how Alcimenēs was lying, looked at his features, felt his pulse, consulted a treatise on critical days that, like a new Hippocrates, he had evolved from his inner imagination; then, with a self-important air, he puffed himself up and pronounced

¹ Allusion is here made to verse 261 of the sixth book of the Iliad, "To a fatigued man wine gives vigor."

the following prognosis in the case: "If thy throat ceases to breathe noisily; if thy lungs no longer oppress thee; if the fever does not interfere with thy respiration, thou wilt not die of pleurisy, and in such a case we presage a near recovery. Take courage; however, call in a lawyer, as it is always wisdom for the sick to arrange their worldly affairs; do not be uneasy, and I, thy physician, as the price of this good advice, ask to be put down in thy will for a fee of one-third of thine estate."

* * *

CALLICTER (Early writer).

EPIGRAM.

With drugs, Rhodon removed leprosy and King's evil; for that matter, however, he oftentimes removed his patients, even without drugs.

* * *

LUCILIUS (Early writer).

EPIGRAMS.

Neither in the flood of the Deucalion, when the earth disappeared under the waters, nor in the burning that Phæton spread through the universe, did as many persons perish as have been killed by the poet Potamon and the surgeon Hermogenes. So that it has been remarked from the beginning of time that there have only been four great calamities on earth—the flood, Phæton's conflagration, Potamon, and surgeon Hermogenes.

Diophantes, having seen the physician Hermogenes in a dream, *never woke up again*, and he wore a charm to protect him against death, too.

MORAL WORKS.

Apothegms of the Lacedemonians.

II. APOTHEGM OF AGESILAUS.

The physician had prescribed for his malady a course of treatment to restore health that was neither simple nor easy to follow, but, on the contrary, a very difficult task. "By the twin-born Gods!" cried the sufferer, "If my destiny be that I will not live, I will not live, although I take all the medicine in the world!"

The physician, Menecrates, had been happy in curing several desperate cases, for which reason he had been nicknamed Jupiter; and he, with his usual arrogance, usurped this name, so that he signed it to his letters, as follows: "Men crates, the Jupiter, to Agesilaus, greeting!"⁽¹⁾ And the King replied, "Agesilaus to Menecrates. Better sense!" Meaning that the doctor had an addled brain.

APOTHEGM OF ARCHIDAMUS. XX.

Periander was a capable physician in his art and much esteemed as an excellent man, although a writer of poor verses. Archidamus one day remarked to him, "I believe, Periander, that you would love to be called a poor poet rather than a good physician!"

APOTHEGM OF PAUSANIAS. LIX.

A physician looked at him and exam-

ined into his physical condition and then remarked, "You are not sick!" "That is why I have no use for you," retorted Pausanias. His friends took him to task for speaking so ill to a doctor whom he had never tried and had never incurred his displeasure. "If I had tried him,"⁽¹⁾ said Pausanias, "I should not now be living." On another occasion a physician had said to him, "You are growing old." And he replied: "Yes; but that is because you

I We find this same idea in the following dialogue:

A Doctor: Why do you go and treat
With assassins, poisoning thugs!
Of doctors the very elite,
When you never before used drugs?

Pausanias: Had I used their drugs I'd not
speak now;

For none make mutes like doctors, I trow.

"Some one," says Bernier, in his "Essais de Medecine," "imagines to have made a beautiful response to a great Lord, to whose kindly charities a doctor, fallen into poverty, had been recommended. For this noble gentleman demanded if the doctor no longer visited patients, when a wit present replied: "He has no more clients. He has killed all of them."

Pausanias was once asked how the Thracians might be exterminated. "Put a physician at the head of the army," was the ready reply.

The author of "Medecine a la censure" makes Sosander say in conversation with Cleante that "War is called the medicine of State for the reason that it leads, like that art, an infinite number of persons to death."

¹ Athenæus relates the same anecdote in regard to a letter written to Philip, as mentioned in a previous note.

have never been my doctor." "And," he continued, "the best physicians are those who do not starve their patients and thus put them sooner under ground."

Apothegms of the Romans.

APOTHEGM OF MARIUS CURIUS.

Fabricus having been named Consul, the physician⁽¹⁾ of Pyrrhus wrote him a letter in which he promised to poison his master if this was desired. Fabricus immediately sent the doctor's letter to Pyrrhus, telling the latter he had bad judgment in knowing how to choose friends and avoid enemies. Pyrrhus, having thus discovered and avoided the plot laid for his life, hung his physician immediately and sent all his Roman prisoners to Fabri-

¹ Elieue, in his "Histoires Variees," says that this physician was named Cineas.

² Democritus responded sagely to Hippocrates, that after thirty years' practice one is the best doctor. This was also the opinion of Nero, but he had a little malice towards doctors, whom he had the audacity to treat as executioners. But Nero was not the only Roman Emperor who jeered at physicians, for Vespasian and Maximilian, among others, have no less abused them. It is said that the latter, being sick, called in a number of doctors, more to divert himself, however,

cus without obliging them to pay a ransom.

OF OLD AGE CONSIDERED IN ITS RELATION
TO THE ADMINISTRATION.

It is shameful, said Tiberius Cæsar, that a man who has passed his sixtieth year should allow a physician to feel his pulse;⁽²⁾ but it is much more shameful to tender his hand to the people, praying them to give voice and suffrage for his election to office, for this is vile and low.

than to be treated, and asked each of them, "Quot?" meaning "How many?" The doctors, not understanding the Prince's question, remained silent, until an old fellow, thinking by the word "Quot?" that Maximilian meant "How many have you killed?" seized his beard with both hands and answered, "Tot!" (as many as that), meaning he had killed as many persons as there were hairs in his whiskers. Delighted and satisfied with this response, Maximilian told the old doctor that he was much wiser than his medical associates, or, at least more witty and sincere.

ANONYMOUS WRITERS.

(Extracts from Greek Anthology.)

THE EYE DOCTOR.

It was not with a probe, but with a trident, that Charinus dressed mine eyes, and he washed them out with a sponge full of ink. In removing his pitch-fork trident he pulled out mine eyes, leaving a portion of his instrument behind. Had he attempted to have dressed mine eyes on a second occasion there would have been no trouble with mine eyes, inasmuch as there had been no eyes left to worry over.

DAMAGORAS AND THE PLAGUE.

Some person, having remarked that Damagoras and the plague had the same numerical value, examined their characters carefully and weighed the result in delicately constructed scales; Damagoras was so heavy, in proportion, that his mortality weight lowered his side of the scale, while the plate containing the plague was lifted high in air by its very contrasting lightness.

THE DOCTOR AND THE GRAVE-DIGGER.

The physician Crates and the grave-digger Damon most pleasantly acted as purveyors to each other. Damon stole the shrouds of all those who were buried and presented them to the physician Crates, that he might dress his patients' wounds therewith. All that Crates thus dressed were soon on their biers, and in order to be interred were sent to Damon.

PROVERB.

Acesias medicatus est (*Acesias treated him*) ⁽¹⁾

1 Acesias lived in the eighteenth Olympiad. He was widely known for his almost total lack of success in practice. Aristophanes lampooned him in sarcasms, gathered and repeated in turn by Tertullian, Suidas and Erasmus, who have discoursed on this unfortunate medical celebrity. His professional ignorance passed as a proverb, and when any affair that was growing worse and worse each day was mentioned, it was a by-word that *Acesias is treating him*.

EXTRACTS FROM THE SCRIPTURES AND WRITINGS OF THE FATHERS
OF THE CHURCH REFLECTING AGAINST
DOCTORS.

OLD TESTAMENT.

CHRONICLES (Book II, chapter xvi).

Asa fell sick, in the thirty-ninth year of his reign, with very violent pains in his feet; meantime, he called not on the Lord in his sickness, but rather put his trust in the physicians.

And he slept with his fathers, dying in the forty-first year of his reign.⁽¹⁾

* * *

NEW TESTAMENT.

THE EVANGELIST ACCORDING TO SAINT
MARK.

There was a woman sick from a loss of blood for more than twelve years.⁽²⁾

She had suffered much in the hands of many physicians, and, having expended all her goods, had found no relief, but had grown worse.

Having heard Jesus spoken of, she

1 The death of this monarch, who expired, notwithstanding the assistance of numerous doctors, after two years of suffering, gave us, without doubt, that reflection of King Hezekiah, who, fearing a similar result or really convinced that medicine was contrary to divine teachings, burned the books of Solomon containing remedies for all diseases, "because," said Cedrenus, "the people esort thereto and neglect to pray to God in order to obtain health."

2 The Biblical extracts are not in strict accordance with the English, King James' version, but the substance is the same.

came in the crowd that followed him, and touched his garments.

For, said she: "If I can but touch the hem of his garment I shall be healed."

At the instant, her flowing of blood ceased, and she felt in her body that she had been cured of her infirmity.

* * *

TERTULLIAN (Christian writer, 2d century A. D.).

EPIGRAM.

They propitiated Æsculapius by *presents*, following the Grecian fashion.

OF THE SOUL.

Soranus, a learned author of methodical medicine, taught that the soul is nourished by corporeal food, and, that it is necessary to feed it in order to prevent its decay.

He claimed that Herophilus ceased to be a physician in order to become a public executioner, and dissected hundreds of bodies for the purpose of interrogating nature; that he was detested by man in order to know him better, and that he might learn the marvels of humanity's internal organization. That he was an executioner, as it gave him the opportunity to see the great changes wrought in the parts suddenly deprived of life, when the death was not natural; that, afterwards, he investigated the bodies dead from disease, as a true ana-

tomist, and by comparison exposed the unhappy failures of life.⁽¹⁾

DEFINITION OF THE SOUL.

The physician Asclepiades was applauded for the following argument:

"The majority of animals, if we remove the part of the body in which is placed the principal seat of the sovereign faculty of the soul, survive sometimes, and give evidence of intelligence. It is so with flies, wasps, grasshoppers, when we cut off their heads; it is the same with goats, turtles and eels, when their hearts are torn out. Then, the preponderating faculty does not exist; if it exists, the vigor of the soul is not continued when the superior faculty is destroyed with its organs. The majority of physicians, Herophilus, Erasistratus, Diocles, Hippocrates and Soranus himself, finally, all other Christian doctors maintain that there is in the soul a dominant faculty, and, that it has its sanctuary in a certain portion of the body.⁽²⁾ Even such thinkers as Protagoras, Apollodorus and Chrysippus are of the same opinion. So that Asclepiades, refuted by

1 Herophilus, physician to Ptolemy Sotor, 570 years before Christ, and Erasistratus, physician to Seleucus Nicanor, dared, under protection of these princes, to dissect human bodies. This audacity, contrary to the moral and religious precepts of ancient times, led them to be accused of dissecting persons alive. Medea was likewise accused of boiling gentlemen alive, when she invented her celebrated hot baths. The same calumny was uttered against Andrew Vesalius in a later age.

2 Hippocrates placed the soul in the brain. Herophilus claimed it was in the cerebellum, Straton and Erasistratus located it in the membranes of the latter organ. Tertullian pretended the seat of the soul was in the heart, being a body *sui generis*. According to this voracious writer, it was male or female; it had three dimensions, length, breadth, depth; it had particular mem-

them, sought for his goats that bleated without hearts, and chased the flies that flew without a head; and all those who believed in the disposition of the human soul after the condition of beasts, knew that *there were those who lived without hearts or brains*.

ON EMBRYOTOMY.

Among the physicians may likewise be met Hicesius, who is faithless to nature, as well as to his art.⁽¹⁾

There was among his instruments of surgery, a brass needle, which served to kill off the infant in its mother's womb, and was called an *embryosphacte* ⁽²⁾ because it was used for infanticide and the destruction of life. It had been in the hands of Hippocrates, Asclepiades, Erasistratus and Herophilus, *who cut up even living men with this instrument*.

* * *

SAINT GREGORIUS NANZIANZEN (329 to 389 A. D.).

EPIGRAM.

The physician who pretends to cure diseases of which he cannot cure himself, is an ignoramus as well as a dishonest man.⁽³⁾

bers, a form in harmony with that of the body; it is palpable, transparent, of an ærian color; all souls rise one from another by propagation, without being formed by a new creation.

The errors of Tertullian, caused his rejection by the Church. According to Vincent de Lerius, we can only classify him as an apostate.

1 This is intended, without doubt, to mean Acesias, to whom a proverb was applied in a previous note.

2 Composed of two Greek words that signify *I kill the embryo*.

3 Plato in his *Republic*, book III, has expressed the same idea in a much more philosophic manner. "Physicians," says he, "became very clever in

SAINT AMBROSIUS (Bishop of Milan, 340 to 397 A. D.).

EPIGRAM.

The rules of medicine are contrary to the knowledge of divine mysteries; they prevent fasting, condemn study and interfere with the exercise of profound meditation.

* * *

SAINT CHRYSOSTOM (Bishop of Constantinople, 347 to 407 A. D.)

EPIGRAM.

The services of doctors are only recog-

their art, if they themselves experience all varieties of maladies when they are debilitated and valetudinarian." Montaigne treats the same subject with his usual spirit and railing and implacable sarcasm, for, in his *Essays*, book III, chapter xiii, he remarks: "They make the same description of our diseases as the town cryer, when he shouts out in the public places that such a horse or such a dog is lost, with such a colored hair, such a height, such a length of ears; but, present them with what is lost, and they recognize it not."

nized by money; it is by prayer alone that the divine physicians of the soul are recompensed (*Reflections on Saint Matthew*, chapter viii).

* * *

SAINT PIERRE CHYSOLOGUE
(Died in 402 A. D.).

EPIGRAM.

How can a physician undertake to cure with full knowledge of the cause, a disease from which he has never suffered? How can those who have not been sick with the infirmity they are called on to treat, pretend to reestablish our health?

* * *

SAINT BERNARD (Celebrated French Abbot, 1091 to 1153 A. D.).

EPIGRAM.

Saint Bernard complained of the avarice of physicians in his time (Bernier, *Essays on Medicine*).

EARLY LATIN AUTHORS.

ANCIENT WRITERS.

PLAUTUS (Comic poet, 184 B.C.).

EXTRACTS FROM A COMEDY.

ACT V, *Scene 1.*

The Old Man: What a violent attack! What frenzy! Ye Gods help us! That fool, meantime, was so full of good sense on various occasions. Ah! this terrible malady that hath overpowered him so suddenly! Go quickly, search a doctor!

[*They depart.*]*Scene 2.*

Menechme [*alone*]: Have they left at last? These pleasant gentlemen, who wish to make one out mad by force, whereas I am perfectly well.

Scene 3.

The Old Man: I have too much kidney disease to sit down and too many eye afflictions to look around while awaiting the physician's return from his sick calls. Ah! this doctor is usually a tiresome personage; yet he takes the trouble to finish his patients! He pretends that Æsculapius and Apollo had the one a broken arm, the other a fractured leg, and that he cured them. On sober thought, I doubt whether it is a doctor or a thick-skulled, stupid blacksmith I shall fetch. Ah! there he comes, walking on pins and needles.

Scene 4.

The Doctor: What disease did you say he has? Repeat the words, old man, is it mania or a frenzy? I desire to know. Was he taken first with a lethargy or with a dropsy?

The Old Man: I will lead you to him, so that you may see all, and so that you may cure him.

The Doctor: Nothing can be easier. I shall cure him, I'll swear it on my word of honor!

The Old Man: His case will require great care, and you must proceed most carefully.

The Doctor: I'll go short-winded six hundred times a day before I'll abate my ardour in the care of him.

The Old Man [*showing Menechme raving*]: Here is the patient.

The Doctor: Let us now observe in what manner he deports himself.

Scene 5.

Menechme [*without apparently noticing their arrival*]: By Pollux! this day is an unfortunate one! A most unlucky period for me. All I hoped to have held secret is discovered by that parasite, author of all my scandal and all my trouble, my perfidious Ulysses, who has caused his king all these chagrins. If the Gods preserve

my life, I will take hers: when I say her life I am speaking like a fool, for she is dear to me. It was at my table she was nourished, and at a large expense. I will deprive her of existence. Ah! this courtesan was as well conducted as the women of her kind. Because I asked her to give me back my wife's robe, she told me she had already sent it her. Ah! by Pollux, I am well ruined!

The Old Man [to the physician]: You have heard what he says?

The Doctor: He complains of his misfortune.

The Old Man: Go speak to your patient!

The Doctor: Greeting,⁽¹⁾ Menechme. Why do you uncover your arm? Do you not know it aggravates the malady!

Menechme: Pah! go hang yourself!

The Doctor: Can you feel?

Menechme: Ye Gods! Yes, I do feel.

The Doctor [to old man]: A whole field of hellebore would not suffice to cure him. But tell me, Menechme?

Menechme: What would you have me tell?

The Doctor: Answer my questions. Do you drink white wine or a wine that's red in color?

Menechme: Go hang yourself! Go to the gibbet or you will decay.

The Doctor: Ah! he commences to rave again.

Menechme: Why not ask me whether I eat red bread or violet, or yellow. Whether I am not nourished on birds with scales and feathered fishes?

The Old Man: Great Heaven! Hear his ravings and most wild extravagances! Hasten and give him a potion, before

¹ Moliere, undoubtedly, was inspired by this play; and his character Pourceaugnac was also a simulator of insanity.

the fell disease doth permeate all his being.

The Doctor: Wait a little, I wish to question him still further.

The Old Man: Further questioning? You will overpower me with your loquacity.

The Doctor: Tell me if your eyes become hard habitually?

Menechme: Fool! Do you take me for a grasshopper?

The Doctor: Do your guts ever rumble and grumble?

Menechme: When I am well fed they do not cry aloud. It is when I'm hungry that I grow most flatulent.

The Doctor: By Jupiter Ammon! his response is not that of a crazy man. Do you sleep until daylight? Can you go to sleep easily when you retire?

Menechme: I sleep when I have paid my debts. May Jupiter and all his Gods confound you, cursed questioner!

The Doctor: His madness recommends. Do you hear him talk? Take care and have your turn.

The Old Man: Ah! there are soft expressions in comparison to what he has already said. He called his wife a mad slut.

Menechme: I use such language?

The Old Man: You are crazy, say I!

Menechme: I mad?

The Old Man: Yes, you are. You said to me that you would crush me under a four-horse chariot. That was one of your most extravagant expressions. I maintain that you said the same.

Menechme: I know that you stole the sacred crown of Jupiter, and for that crime should be cast into prison. You should not be allowed out of gaol save to be beaten by rods and handcuffed, that I know. I also know that you assassinated

your own father and likewise sold your mother. Am I present in spirit? and, have I returned injury for injury?

The Old Man: I conjure you, physician, to render your good offices most speedily. Do you not see the nature of his attack?

The Doctor: Do you know what 'tis best to do? We will carry him to my house.

The Old Man: Is that your advice?

The Doctor: Yes, for I could there attend him at my pleasure.

The Old Man: What would you make him do?

The Doctor: I should make him drink of hellebore for twenty days at least.

Menechme: And I should hang you and flog you for thirty days at least.

The Doctor (to old man): Go search for men to carry our patient.

The Old Man: How many persons will it need?

The Doctor: With such wild dementia, four good men—no less.

The Old Man: They will be here immediately—and Doctor, will you guard our patient well?

The Doctor: I am not here to guard; I shall go to my house in order to prepare what is necessary. Tell your servants to bring your friend to me.

The Old Man: He will soon be with you.

The Doctor: I shall leave now.

The Old Man: We will meet again (*they separate and retire*).

Menechme: My father-in-law has gone, the physician has left—I am alone. Great Jupiter! why will these men adjudge me insane! Since I was born I have never had a day's sickness. I am not crazy, and seek no quarrel with any one. I am in my right mind, and I see others as they are.

I recognize friends and speak to them. Those who pretend I am without my reasoning faculties—have they themselves not lost their heads?

* * *

CICERO (107 to 43 B.C.).

CORRESPONDENCE WITH TYRON, HIS
FREEDMAN.

I have heard, as you have written me, that all have a good opinion of your physician Æsclepiion; meantime, I cannot approve his methods, but have taken care that he shall know my opinion of this point.

I have written Cassius to give you money, of which you undoubtedly have need; I believe it best to give some of it to your physician, *in order to make him more careful in his treatment.*

ORATIONS.

SPEECH AGAINST VERRES.

When two citizens had a trial Verres gave them for judges, following his whimsical caprice, the town cryer, an aurespice and his physician, Cornelius. (!) What are

1 "We learn," says Dr. Meniere, in his "Medico-legal Study on Cicero," "that Cornelius was from Perga, in Pamphylia, and had borne the name of Artemidorus; and that he aided Verres, at that time Prætor of the Province, to pillage the Temple of Diana. He was most certainly an abominable character, and we fully agree in the judgement rendered against him. Cicero cited a large number of his victims; some had been beaten with rods, others hung to trees, always following verdicts rendered by the doctor and town cryer. Here is a passage that aroused the indignation of the prosecutor. The deputies of Agyrium were accused of having violated an edict of Verres; they were betrayed before a tribunal consisting of Cornelius, the Prætor's physician, the deputy Valerius, the painter Tipoleme and other parties of similar reputation. 'Note,'

these men? Here is a pack of famished hounds prowling around me, or, rather, these are the curs you notice licking the Tribunal of Justice.

SPEECH IN FAVOR OF CLUENTIUS
AVITUS.

Dinea finding herself indisposed, her son-in-law, Oppianicus, "brought in his doctor, who had freed the victorious minister of many obnoxious people. The woman cried that she did not desire the care of this physician who had caused her to suffer the loss of an entire family."

The unfortunate mother-in-law could not escape the danger that threatened her, however, for Oppianicus employed a traveling empiric named Clodius, who, for the sum of four hundred sesterces, undertook to treat the case. "He was introduced to the patient, and gave her a draught of medicine, and, very soon, she died" (*Meniere*, "*Ciceronian Medicine*").

Shortly after, the physician Straton, violated and murdered Sassia; he likewise assassinated two slaves guarding the treasure; but the crime was discovered, and the culprit was crucified after having had his tongue cut out.

SPEECH AGAINST VATINIUS.

Pison, Governor of Macedonia, not being able to extort a sum of money from a deputy named Plator, threw the unfortunate man into prison, and sent a physician to open his veins. This murder being done with the most atrocious barbarity,

said Cicero, 'there was not among the number a single Roman citizen; it was a vile rabble of sacrilegious Greeks, famous a long time for their crimes.' It is difficult to perfectly brand a man of such an atrocious stamp; and, to Cicero, Cornelius was synonymous with rascal and miserable scoundrel."

Cicero exclaimed: "Eh! where are the executioners, when doctors are employed not to cure, but to kill?" (*Meniere*, "*Ciceronian Medicine*").

* * *

SULPICIOUS SERVIUS RUFUS
(Early Latin author).

TO CICERO.

Imitate not those bad physicians, who, in caring for others, boast of possessing all medical science, and cannot even cure themselves.

* * *

SENECA (Preceptor to Nero, 1st century A. D.).

EPIGRAMS.

Avoid the council of doctors; with as much ignorance as zeal, they will murder you in the most obliging manner in the world.

Nothing is more discreditable to a physician than to pry too closely into the work of his medicine.

* * *

PUBLIUS SYRUS (1st century B. C.).

SENTENCES.

Male babebit medicus, nemo si male babuerit.

IMITATION.

The exit of a doctor is often viewed most sadly, The patient, feebleth better, the physician feebleth badly.

Medicorum nutrix est intemperantia.

IMITATION.

T'is our intemperances and habits, all health spoiling,
That for physicians keep the pot a'boiling.

Crudelem medicum intemperans æger facit.

IMITATION.

If we wish to be sensible and live on half diet,
The doctor is furious and cannot keep quiet.

Male secum agit æger, medicum qui heredem facit.

IMITATION.

A patient has not sense, nor e'en of spirit,
When he informs the doctor, he'll inherit,

IMITATION SECOND.

This good old, man tormented by the colic,
In the near future doth his end forsee;
His doctor is an Æsclapian melancholic,
Whom he hath named residuary legatee.^(†)

—Version of *Poan, Saint Simon.*

* * *

PLINIUS SECUNDUS (Philosopher,
23 to 79 A. D.).

NATURAL HISTORY.

*Criticism on the employment of medicines,
compounds, and exotics.*

BOOK XIII.

It is true that physicians pretend that we fail to have remedies in many cases, and with this excuse they cover up the use they make of injurious drugs. They even have the impudence to contend that medicine should not be classed with the poisons.

BOOK XXII.

Nature, that good mother and Divine worker, never made cerates, plasters, antidotes or collyriums. These are the inventions of the doctors, or rather, their methods for gain.

[†] This reproach is impossible at the present day in France, at least, inasmuch as the *Code Napoleon*, annuls legacies made to physicians by their patients.

BOOK XXIV.

The *Materia Medica*s are innumerable; this is the necessary outcome of physic. Nature can only create proper remedies, easy to find, that may be procured without expense, and which in need, we use for nourishment. It is rank fraud and charlatanism that has invented the laboratory where they promise to restore life for the price of money; it is there that compositions and mixtures are first recognized when introduced; it is therein that they boast of remedies brought at great expense from Arabia and India. They will tell you that the Red Sea produces the only agent against a carbuncle, whereas, we see our poor people cure themselves with the condiments on which they are fed. But would not medicine be considered a vile art were each one to gather herbs and shrubs in his own garden to serve for medical specifics? It is from this, that Roman grandeur has lost its antique severity; the victors have been subdued by the vanquished; the Roman obeys the barbarians; and, it is an art which is employed on our empire, and our emperors themselves.

BOOK XXXIV.

But of all these distinctions, physicians (it may be said of them without doing injury) know nothing; the majority, indeed, know not even the names of diseases, and are far from the art of medication—an art, meantime, that is the very basis of the profession. At present, then, every time they read a dispensary they find therein some recipe that they judge fit to use on the first victim of their speculations; they rest faith entirely on the composition of this drug, as do those upon whom they practice their deceitful art, which is only a fraud and perpetual sophistication. What do I

say? I repeat, that we see at the present day physicians who are not ashamed to sell and trade, on their sick visits, the plasters and collyriums of fraud. This abuse is carried to such a point that the druggists have no better work than to purge their shops of all the spoiled and adulterated drugs standing rancid on their shelves.

How the Physician Asclepiades Discredited Ancient Medicine.

BOOK XXVI.

Meantime ancient methods are maintained in all their vigor and have to favor them the great witnesses of the past, since in the time of Pompey the orator Asclepiades, who could not draw as much profit from his rhetoric as he desired, showed his sagacity of spirit by turning from declamation on the rostrum and suddenly becoming a physician. The only defense he had for a man who had never practiced the healing art and knew nothing of remedies, a knowledge only to be obtained by practice with the eyes and usage, was that he renounced all the accepted theories of medicine.⁽¹⁾ He talked eloquently to flatter his patients, and never used speech without due preparation; he claimed to in-

vestigate the causes of each disease and thus render all conjectural. His practice revolved upon five principal methods of cure, *i.e.*, abstinence from food, sometimes from wine, frequent friction of the body, exercise on foot, or horseback riding. Now, as such treatment was within easy reach of everyone in those days, all the world became interested in the success of his remedies⁽¹⁾ that were so easy and simple. The eyes of the human race were fixed on this great physician, and he was regarded as an angel sent from Heaven.

Irony upon the Death of Asclepiades.

BOOK VII.

The physician Asclepiades was crowned with honors, for the reason that he established a new medical sect, threw contempt on the ambassadors and promises made by King Mithridates, cured all diseases by the use of plenty of wine, saved the life of a man who had been entombed alive, but, above all, by the contract he entered into with Dame Fortune, inasmuch as he consented to his own dishonor by disgracing his profession. He wagered that he would never be sick and won, as he died at an extreme old age from falling down his own stairs.

Of the Uncertainty and Variations of Medical Doctrines.

BOOK XXIX.

We cannot see, without astonishment and some indignation, that no art is less

I "Asclepiades," says Galen, "let no ancient dogma pass without repeating it, and spared no physician who had preceded him, not even Hippocrates; and he was so bold as to call ancient medicine 'a meditation on death,' because, forsooth, there once existed a system of expectant medicine."

He did not even respect his contemporaries. "When," says Cæsar Aurelianus, "they called Asclepiades to see a patient who had been under another physician's care, he affected to reject all the remedies used by his fellow-practitioner, and approved all those agents that had been pronounced injurious by others, as being useful when he prescribed them."

1 This recalls the memory of Archagatus, who incurred the enmity of the Romans by his too frequent use of iron and fire in his surgical practice. He was a man who opposed all his contemporaries by inaugurating a totally different practice; he would not use emetics or purgatives, claiming such remedies injured the stomach. He said the duty of a physician was "to cure in a

constant⁽¹⁾ and at the same time subject to more variation than medicine, although the most lucrative profession of all

The same age as that in which Nero lived saw medicine pass under the laws of Thessalus, who obliterated all the ancient precepts of the healing art and was the implacable foe of medicine, declaiming with fury against all doctors who had practiced their profession up to that epoch. A single instance will suffice to let us judge of the wisdom and character of this man. He insolently proclaimed for himself the title of "Iatronice," and had this inscription placed as an epitaph on his tomb in the Appian Road. When he went out in public he had a more numerous escort than any pantomime company or circus leader. Meantime, Crinas, of Marseilles, who combined medicine with the science of mathematics, made a great reputation for prudence and religion at the same time. He made his patients take food only at certain hours and under certain conditions, that were always regulated by the almanac, and by this method acquired more authority than even Thessalus, and left, on dying, what in our days would amount to one hundred times five thousand sesterces (about two hundred thousand dollars of our money) for the construction of a wall around his native city; and, besides, gave about as much more for building defenses for other towns. These two doctors, Thessalus and Crinas, ruled over the medical lives of men until Charmis suddenly seized

prompt, sure, and agreeable manner" (*tuto celeriter et jucunde*); which led the witty Guy Patin to observe, after repeating these words: "He sent them to the other world *surely* and *promptly*. What a difference between doctors!"

1 The "Dictiaques" of Denis Egee, to which Photius refers in one of his works, contained one hundred chapters on the *Materia Medica*.

the medical scepter of Rome, and condemned all his medical predecessors by proscribing absolutely the use of hot baths. In the end he established cold-water bathing; even in the coldest of winter weather he plunged his patients under the ice, and old Consuls were noted freezing themselves in order to be in the medical fashion; we have Seneca's authority for this statement. Medical fashion then, as now, was the rage, and any new doctor's novelty was the envy of other doctors and a traffic in human life. Regarding unfortunate controversies and contrary opinions around the bedsides of patients, where consulting physicians failed to agree one with the other, we cannot hazard an opinion nor take sides. We remember that sad inscription on a tomb where it is said of the dead, "A great number of doctors caused him to perish."⁽¹⁾

Every day medical art is inconstant and subject to so many variations and changes, that we are moved like the billows on the ocean by the winds of the charlatans from Greece; for it is evident that those among them that have the talent to discourse⁽²⁾ become absolute arbiters of

1 He alludes to the Emperor Hadrian; like Moliere, he was phthisical, and, like him, declared that the doctors were powerless to cure him. This phrase is an old Greek proverb, met for the first time in the fragments left by the poet Menander. Refer to previous foot-note.

2 A rude jester has defined medicine as "the art of bragging well and gilding pills." The same as an ancient proverb says: "It is a shame for a doctor not to be able to give reasons, as for a lawyer not to know the laws." A similar thought is attributed to Moliere by some scoffers, but Maurice Raynaud wrongly places it in the "Festin de Pierre," when he notes that "a doctor is a man whom we pay for counting the *fariboles* in a patient's chamber up to the point where nature may have cured or the remedies may have killed.

our lives—or deaths—as though there were not thousands of people⁽¹⁾ who *lived* without doctors, if not without medicines—as, for instance, the Romans, who existed more than six hundred years,⁽²⁾ although not slow at accepting *useful* arts, and had once embraced the healing profession with avidity, up to the time that many sad experiences had led them to condemn its fraudulent pretensions.

It is here that we may retrace all that is most remarkable on this subject occurring among our forefathers. Cassius Herminius, one of our ancient authors, reports that the first physician who appeared at Rome was Archagatus, son of Lysinias, who came from Peloponessus to that place under the consulships of Lucius Æmilius and Marcus Livius, in the year 535, and was accorded the right of a patrician; and that there was purchased for him, from the public moneys, a shop on the street known as Acilius; that this physician was named *physician for wounds*, or *ruinervary*, because he followed that rather as a specialty; that

1 Herodotus cites the Babylonians and Strabo mentions the Bastelians of Sain who were thus situated. Homer tells us that every Egyptian was a doctor. Among the Assyrians and Macedonians the patients were exposed to the public gaze, and every passer-by was invited to give counsel; even at the present day every man thinks he knows all about medicine. Other races have expressed the greatest respect for the disciples of Æsculapius; among the Locrians, for example, a law of Zeleucus condemned any patient to death who drank wine without the authorization of his physician, even although he be not damaged by the stimulant.

2 Pliny probably intended to speak of foreign physicians, for, according to Dion of Halicarnassus, during the plague that attacked Rome in the three hundred and first year of its foundation, or more than two hundred years before the epoch indicated by Pliny, there were not physicians enough to attend to all the sick.

his arrival gave great public gratification; but that his cruelty with the actual cautery on the human body soon led the people to proclaim him an *executioner*, and afterwards to detest the art of all physicians. It was this that rendered Cato so sensitive,—he who held such authority in contempt, respecting neither the censure that it exercised nor the triumph it obtained, because he had much more solid foundations of knowledge in himself. We quote his words:

“I shall speak to you, Marcus, my son, of these Greeks in good time and place. I indicated to you what I have found excellent in Athens, and desire you to understand that it is well to know a smattering of their *belle lettres*, but not to study them profoundly. They are an undisciplined race, and a very, very wicked people! These are the words of an inspired man, who thus speaks knowingly of them. Every time this Greek nation sends us its wisdom it spreads corruption in our very midst, this being especially the case when it sends us its physicians. They have sworn, among themselves, to kill off all those whom they call Barbarians.⁽¹⁾ They make medicine a mercenary pursuit in order to gain our confidence the more readily, and lose our lives more easily. They consider and treat us as barbarians, and this qualification is a grave and more atrocious injury to us than to other races that are uncultured and rude. I forbid you from having any intercourse with their wicked physicians.”

1 Cato founded this reproach on the fact that Hippocrates refused to render medical assistance to Artaxerxes, because “he cured not the Barbarians, who are enemies to Greece.”

Portraits of Greek Doctors Practicing at Rome.

BOOK XIX.

The physician is the only artisan whose word is implicitly relied on, for we always believe what the doctor tells us, although it is an art where imposture begets the most serious consequences. We think not for ourselves so much to recover our health as to be charmed and deluded. We have no laws to punish the ignorance that causes deaths among our people—no examples of public prosecution against a medical man's testimony. The physician instructs himself at our expense, he experiments and presents us to death; it is only doctors who can kill a man with impunity. That's what I say! It is the doctor who accuses instead of being accused; he claims the result of failure in treatment to be due to the previous intemperance of the patient; the patient alone is responsible for dying.

What profession has poisoned more people and captured more heritages? What profession has carried on more adulteries even within the very gates of the Cæsars?(!)

Need I speak of medical avariciousness and the onerous conditions they add to our agonies, of the retaining fees they demand to save us from death, of the secret remedies they sell us at such exorbitant prices?

If they treat, for example, a cataract, they prefer to remove but a portion in place of extirpating the whole, in order to again operate thereon when the disease returns. From all this professional brigandage some good seems to have been derived

in the end by the public, due to the multitude of these assassins, for at least what modesty would never have enabled us to obtain. Competition has diminished the price of their remedies and medical services. But all these facts may be personal, and perhaps we should not impute to the art the ignorance and baseness of that vile crowd of charlatans who practice it, nor the enormous abuse that they make of remedies in treating the sick, nor the hot baths in which the sick parade to obtain health, nor that merciless diet that is ordered with so much authority for those who are perfectly healthy, and those foods poured down the throats of the dying several times each day. They use a thousand methods to repair the injuries they themselves do, and return then in their own footsteps. They launch out new systems of diet and for the government of the kitchen; they use perfumes to flatter the sick with the attractions of life. I certainly think our ancestors did not all taste nor use the high-priced drugs imported from abroad, and this Cato, in condemning the healing art, has not apparently foreseen.

Shall I speak of that *theriacum*, compounded for the rich, that antidote of Mithridates, a confused admixture of fifty-four drugs, each of a different weight, and some in infinitesimal quantity? It was in order to secure a higher price for their remedies that they so ostentatiously published their prodigious science—a science of which they were ignorant even in the primary elements. I have acquired the conviction that in their formulæ they use the name of a substance for that of a contrary substance. That is what Cato foresaw in his rage, and it was that which made the Senate proscribe so insidious a profession for the space of six hundred

I Pliny, without doubt, alludes to Eudemius, physician to Livia, wife of Drusus, and to Valeus Vectius, physician to Messalinus, husband of Claudia. See further notes in "Annals" of Tacitus.

years, which served to convert even honest doctors into charlatans. The Senate thus combatted in advance the hallucinations of diseased minds that think that nothing is more salutary than the medicine that costs the highest price. The ancients never condemned the remedies in themselves, but the artists who administered them. They did not desire that the life of men should be put at such a high value that doctors carried off their estates. It is pretended even that when the sect of Æsculapius were admitted to Rome,⁽¹⁾ they built a temple to him outside the city, afterwards on an island; and that, when driven out of Italy, the Greeks, long after the time of Cato, especially the physicians, were proscribed.

My object in making these remarks is only to repeat the work of our forefathers by putting my fellow citizens in a condition to pass by the doctor.⁽²⁾

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1 In the year 350 of the foundation of Rome, ten deputies, on the advice of the Oracle, went in search of Æsculapius to Epidaurus in order to deliver their city from the plague. They returned with a serpent that had crawled down from the God's statue; but on the journey back the snake escaped from the ship, went back to the Tiber, and curled up on an island in that river. This was the place the deputies chose whereon to erect a temple to the God of Medicine, and the plague soon ceased. That is the legend at least.

Pliny insinuates that the Romans constructed this temple outside the city from fear of the doctors; but the view of Plutarch is more natural. This author says that the Temple of Æsculapius was, as at Epidaurus, placed in the country in order to give the patients visiting the spot a chance to sleep in a purer air than that found in cities. As to the choice of an island for the construction of the Temple, Festus explains by remarking that the neighborhood of water was regarded as having a beneficial effect on the sick.

2 It would be ridiculous to give the innumerable recipes that this bitter-spirited critic of doc-

PLINIUS VALERIANUS⁽¹⁾ (Early writer.)

On Medicine.

PREFACE.

During my travels it has often happened that sickness has either attacked one or more of my servants, and thus led me to recognize the poor practice of physicians. Some of these doctors sold me cheap remedies at enormously high prices; others, through cupidity, charged for treating a disease of which they knew nothing. Certain ones practiced another variety of stealing; indispositions they could have cured in a few hours or days, they treated for weeks,⁽²⁾ so that the patients became a regular source of revenue and the doctor more to be dreaded than the malady. It has often seemed necessary to collect a number of recipes and arrange a list, to the end of avoiding snares of this kind, and thus be able to miss, while on my travels, with some degree of assurance, the attendance, during indisposition, of those doctors who seek to draw a revenue

tors wished to substitute for the formulæ of those physicians. he abused so unceasingly. It is a medley of absurdities, of old women's remedies, in which superstition and magic are equally combined, for be it said to Pliny's reproach, that precisely what he blamed medical men for is found to be exaggerated in himself. He accepted the most silly and fanciful stories as true, and confided in the most fabulous observations without verification, and often without understanding what he discussed.

1 This name is, doubtless, the pseudonym of an author who, under the title of "Re Medica," arranged the remedies indicated by Pliny the Elder in his work consecrated to medicine.

2 This is a common error and prejudice among people of the present day, who ignorantly place Regular medicine on the same level with charlatanism.

from my person and profit on occasions of sickness to enrich themselves.

* * *

QUINTILIAN (Celebrated rhetorician, 42 to 120 A.D.).

Declamations.

THE SICK TWINS—PLOT.

A pair of twin brothers fall sick. Physicians, being consulted, declare that they suffer from the same malady; and, as life is in despair, they promise, if allowed to open one of the infants, to cure the other sick one after studying the vivisected babe's entrails. With the consent of the father, one of the twins is cut open and the other, according to medical promise, is cured. The mother accuses the father of having cruelly treated the dead child.

The Mother against the Father. — Now, she could not resist his displeasure; she was inconsolable that a son was lost who might have been saved. She would not be convinced that his malady was mortal, although they might be able to discover within him the means of restoring health to his brother. There was reason in not accusing the old man of cruelty for his child's murder, if the point was made that one was saved, whereas two might have otherwise been slain; yet a father who kills his son may be said to have lost him, although he might claim consolation from the fact that he had saved one out of two of his children. But a mother's reasoning is different. She had no faith in the promises of the doctors, and would never have consented to such a cruel operation. The father must seem criminal to all had he slain both his boys, in place of allowing the doctors to select their victim, the which *only by chance* saved the other.

What difference that the physicians

agreed that one child must die for the other, when it was the same disease?

The event demonstrated that they were deceived, etc., etc.(!)

EPIGRAMS.

Medicine does nothing but flatter us with vain hopes; whether it abandons us to fate or whether it assists us, is an indifferent matter. The first created of mankind were healthy and robust, and never called in the aid of the doctor.

It is not medicine that cures, but everything that cures is called a medicine. Is it not remarkable that the art which it is said was invented for the conservation of life insolently attributes to itself the power of foreseeing the future when it announces our deaths?

There is nothing more important to mankind than to build up a hope for life. This is the reason we seek to delay our own funerals.

* * *

JUVENAL (Satirical poet, 42 to 125 A.D.).

SATIRE.

Præterea minimus, gelido jam in corpore, sanguis
Febre calet sola; circumsilat agmine facto
Morborem omne genus. Quorum si nomina
quæris,
Promptius expediam quot amaverit Hippia
mæchos,
Quot Themison ægros autumnos occiderit uno,
Quot Basilus socios quot circumscriptis
Pupillos, quot longa viros exorbeat uno
Maura die, quot discipulos inclinet Hamillus.

1 This declamation is too long for insertion in a selection of brief extracts. It may be found in full in "Le Mal qu'on a dit des Medecins," where Dr. Witkowski has adapted to the modern French the translation of Du Teil, made in the year 1658.

PROSE IMITATION.

The fever alone gives some heat to the rest of the blood that circulates in his frozen veins. All maladies assail him in a crowd. Were it necessary to give the list, I would as soon count the lovers of Hippia, or enumerate the patients despatched by Themison⁽¹⁾ in a single autumn, or the allies despoiled by Basilus, etc., etc.

* * *

MARTIAL (Satirical poet, 43 to 104 A.D.).

AGAINST DOCTOR DIAULUS ⁽²⁾

Chirurgus fuerat, nunc est Vespillo Diaulus; cœpit quo poterat, clinicus esse modo.

IMITATION.

Diaulus a surgeon is, and also a digger of graves;
In the latter trade he's useful, not many lives he saves.

IMITATION.

Roch, jadis Medecin, aujourd'hui fossoyeur,
Maintenant etend dans la biere
Tous ceux qu'il etendait sur un lit de douleur;
C'est bien la, jusqu' au bout, poursuivre son affaire.

—Arrangement of C. DUBOIS.

AGAINST DIAULUS.

Nuper erat medicus, nunc est Vespillo Diaulus
Quod Vespillo facit, fecerat et medicus.

PROSE IMITATION.

Diaulus was a physician yesterday; he is a grave-digger to-day; this is not changing his trade, however.⁽¹⁾

AGAINST THE PHYSICIAN SYMMACHUS.

Languebam; sed tu comitatus protinus ad me
Venisti centum, Symmache, discipulis.
Centum me tetigere manus Aquilone gelatæ.
Non habui febrem, Symmache: nunc habeo.

PROSE IMITATION.

I was indisposed; thou soon camest to mine assistance, Symmachus, accompanied by a hundred of thine disciples. A hundred cold hands felt mine body. I had no fever then, Symmachus, but to-day I have.

IMITATION.

I'm sick. I send for Symmachus; he's here,
A hundred students following at his rear.
All feel my pulse, with hands as cold as snow.
I had no fever then,—I have it now.

IMITATION.

Je languissais, docteur, mais tu vins a l'instant;
Je n'avais pas la fièvre, et je l'ai maintenant.⁽²⁾

AGAINST DOCTOR HERMOCRATES.

Lotus nobiscum est hilaris, cœnavit et idem;
Inventus mane est mortuus Andragoras.
Tam subitæ mortis causam, Faustine, requiris?
Insomnis medicum viderat Hermocratam.

IMITATION.

He bathed with us, dined too, in humor most gay.
Yet this morning found him dead in his bed.

1 Themison, of Laodicea, lived in the times of Pompey, and founded the sect known as Methodists—in medicine. Says Juvenal in his 10th satire:

“How many sick in one short autumn fell,
Let Themison, their ruthless slayer, tell.”

2 The point of this epigram is impossible to render in translation; it reposes on the equivalent of the etymology of *clinicus*, which comes from the Greek word signifying a bed or a bier.

1 This epigram has been changed to suit the names of different individuals by Maynard, Dubos, Jouquet, Ducereau, Charles Saint Amand, Boileau, Bouriaud, and many others, whose imitations need not be inserted in this translation, as all are only poor copies of the original 1y Martial.

2 The French as well as English imitations of this epigram are numerous. The best of the latter is that appearing in the Bristol Medical-Chirurgical Journal, 1888.

You ask me, Faustinus, what called him away?

Why, he saw, in his dreams, Hermocrates, 'tis said.

IMITATION.

Hill, bien portant et gai, nous fit visite hier,
Et mort on l'a trouve dans son lit ce matin.
Tu veux savoir pourquoi cette morte si subite ?
Le malheureux en songe a vu son medecin.

(French adaptation of Pommereul.)

AGAINST CHARIDEMES.

Uxorem, Charideme, tuam scis ipse, sinisque
A medico futui ; vis sine febre mori.

PROSE IMITATION.

Thine physician is the declared lover of
thine wife ; thou art not ignorant of the
fact, Charideme, and thou allowest it.
Thou wilt die without even having a
fever.⁽¹⁾

IMITATION.

When a doctor's wanting,
Go ask your wife ;
She will advise you,
'Twill cost your life.

IMITATION.

Le jeune medecin Fleurant
Devient tous les jours a la mode.
Pour les maris il est tres complaisant,
Et pour les femmes tres commode.
(Adaptation of La Touche.)

IMITATION.

A young doctor visits too often your house,
And no jealousy wakens thereby.
When you are sick he'll be called in by your
spouse,
And, without any fever, you'll die.
(Adaptation from Pommereul.)

AGAINST A BAD DOCTOR.

Hoplomachus nunc es ; fueras ophthalmicus ante ;
Fecisti medicus, quod facis hoplomachus.

¹ That is to say, he will be poisoned, although some commentators draw a different signification.

PROSE IMITATION.

You are an oculist ; you were a gladiator : the sword or the bistouri answers the same purpose in your hand.

IMITATION.

The wicked Doctor Clitanders,
Once slaying was his mission
As a soldier out in Flanders ;
In France, he's a physician.

IMITATION.

Jadis gladiateur, aujourd'hui medecin,
Rufus n'a pas quitte son metier d'assassin.

UPON HIPPOCRATES.

Santonica medicata dedit mihi pocula virga,
Os hominis ! mulsum me rogat Hippocrates.
Tam stupidus, nunquam nec tu, puto, Glauce,
fuisti,
Chalcea donanti. Chrysea qui dederas.
Dulce aliquis munus pro munere poscit amaro ?
Accipiat, sed si potat in elleboro.

PROSE IMITATION.

Hippocrates has given me a potion
poisoned with the santonin herb. The
impertinent fellow ! He asks in exchange
honey wine. Thou wert never so stupid,
Glaucus, when, for the arms of gold given
thee, thou gavest back arms of brass. To
demand a sweet favor for a bitter present !
I have consented, however, on condition
he drinks my wine in a mixture of helle-
bore.

UPON HERODES.

Clinicus Herodes trullam subduxerat ægro ;
Deprensus dixit : Stulte, quid ergo bibis ?

PROSE IMITATION.

The physician Herodes had stolen the
goblet of one of his patients ; caught in the
very act he said to the sick man : " Fool !
would you drink out of that without my
prescription ? "

IMITATION.

A doctor stole a silver cup,
But, detected on the spot,
Said, "Patient, from this do not sup!
Or death will be your lot."

UPON A MAD PHYSICIAN.

Invasit medicus sica phreneticus Eucli,
Et præcidit Hylan. Hic, puto, sanus erat.

PROSE IMITATION.

A physician in an excess of frenzy
seized Hylas, the favorite of Euclius, and
committed a wrongful act. I imagine the
patient was cured.

IMITATION.

The great Doctor Bcerhaave treated
Signor Saint Far, suspected of folly.
The doctor's wife, 'tis repeated,
Was pretty, loving, and jolly.
Saint Far was handsome and pleasing—
The doctor a dried-up old stick.
Saint Far's complaint kept eeking,
Soon, he was no longer sick.
(Adaptation from E. T. Simon.)

AGAINST THE PHYSICIAN CARUS.

Nequius a Caro nihil unquam, Maxime, factum
est,
Quam quod febre perit; fecit et illa nefas.
Sæva nocens febris saltem quartana fuisset!
Servari medico debuit illa suo.

PROSE IMITATION.

An acute continued fever killed Carus,
O Maximus! What misfortune! Cruel
Fever! Ah! had the fever been quartan
Carus would not have called a physician.

IMITATION.

Carus est mort, Maxime; une fièvre inhumaine
Nous l'a ravi dans moins d'une huitaine.
Pauvre Carus! de grand cœur je te plains.
Ah! si ta fièvre tierce avait été quartaine,
Tu t'en disais le médecin
Et tu ne serais mort du moins que de ta main.
(Adaptation of C. Dubois.)

IMITATION.

The druggist, Bastien Legrow,
Died of a fever violent;
Had his type of disease been slow
He'd never for a doctor sent.

* * *

TACITUS (Latin historian, born in the
year 50 A.D.)

Annals.

THE POISONING OF DRUSUS, HUSBAND
OF LIVIA.

Sejan plotted with Eudemus, friend
and family physician of Livia, and the
latter under cover of his medical profes-
sion often saw Livia in secret.⁽¹⁾ He had
by his wife Apicata three children, her
he repudiated, so that there should be no
female rivals for his favors. This Eudemus
made known many secret remedies that
appeared useful to his medical art.⁽²⁾

POISONING OF CLAUDIUS.

The historians of that epoch have report-
ed many things that time has since served
to clear up; it is said that the Prince was
fed poisonous mushrooms, that truly deli-
cious food, and that the Prince perceived
not the toxic effects, either through stupid-
ity or from drunkenness; besides, sudden
enervation bid fair to have saved him, but
at this juncture Agrippina, seized with
affright lest he should live, sought her phy-
sician, Xenophon, to whom she had con-
fided her secret. The latter, under pre-
text of aiding the Prince to vomit, pushed
a feather down the throat of Claudius, and

1 Some authors have concluded from this passage that Eudemus was Livia's lover, as Vectius Valens was the admirer of Messalina.

2 The crime was discovered eight years afterwards, and Eudemus was tortured to death.

this feather was impregnated with a subtle poison, for the doctor was not ignorant of the fact that risks are always taken in the commission of great crimes.⁽¹⁾

* * *

SUETONIUS (Latin historian, satirist of the Cæsars, 65 A.D.)

History of the Twelve Cæsars.

NERO.

The death of his aunt almost followed the murder of Agrippina. She was ill with a disease of the entrails; he went to see her, and this woman, already well advanced in years, touched his beard as though to caress him. He said: "When this beard falls out I will die." He made the remark as if in pleasantry, to amuse those around him, then went out and ordered the physician to purge her violently.

It was thus he destroyed, under all sorts of pretexts, those whom he desired to put out of the way. To those condemned to death he gave a single hour for preparation, and in those cases where he was forced to delay action *he always sent a physician in charge*. According to his expression, such persons needed to have their veins opened.

* * *

PETRONIUS (Elegant but obscure Latin writer, 66 A.D.).

SATIRES.

What do they say, that Chrvsanthius did not observe a severe diet? For five days

¹ Caius Stertinius Xenophon, to us, seems perfectly innocent of the death of Claudius. He did his medical duty in seeking to produce vomiting by tickling the throat with a feather, in order

not a drop of water nor a morsel of bread entered his mouth; in the meantime, *he has left us*. But he had too many doctors, or, rather, he succumbed to his bad Destiny; for, after all, a physician can only assist the spirit—to depart.

"Excuse me, my friends," said he; "for several days my belly has not properly performed its functions, and physicians know nothing. Meantime, I have received relief from an infusion of pomegranate bark and spruce in vinegar. I trust, nevertheless, that the storm rumbling in my entrails will blow over and calm down; otherwise, my stomach will resound again with a noise similar to that made by a roaring bull. If, indeed, others of you felt the same imperative call of nature, you would do wrong to restrain it, for no one is exempt from such infirmities. For myself, I deem any one foolish to prevent a healthful operation.⁽¹⁾ Jupiter himself would not forbid the defecating act. You laugh, Fortunatus—you whose noisy detonations prevent me from closing my eyes in gentle sleep at nights. Never have I prevented any of my convivial companions to even take at table all the liberties allowed the calls of nature when desired. Physicians advise that the constipating act should ever be avoided.

to relieve the stomach from the poison. This accusation seems less founded since Claudius held his physician in high esteem, and in his honor obliged the Senate to promulgate an edict to perpetually exempt all the inhabitants of the Isle of Cos from taxes, as Cos was a celebrated birthplace of doctors.

¹ Suetonius relates that the Emperor Claudius defecated at his table, because he had understood that one of his rollicking guests was uncomfortable in his retention. This striking example of antique politeness on part of the host has, fortunately, never been repeated in modern society.

What is, according to yourself, the most difficult professions of all, after that of literature? To me, it seems to be that of medicine and banking; in fact, the banker, in running over silver money, must be able to know the copper alloy; the physician must know what a man has in his entrails, and when his fever is about to declare itself. I hate these doctors, however, who too often prescribe duck (*quack!*) soup.⁽¹⁾

* * *

QUINTIUS CURTIUS (Latin historian, 2d century A.D.).

History of Alexander the Great.

ARISTOTLE SUSPECTED OF HAVING POISONED ALEXANDER.

Towards the end of his life, the heart of Alexander, drunken with arrogant conceit, commenced to disdain its ancient master, Aristotle. Since the death of Callisthenes he thought the latter his enemy, and believed what he heard from motives of vengeance rather than through wisdom—that the historian declaimed against him in his school; and Alexander imagined that Aristotle thought himself all the world in point of human grandeur. This was shortly before his death. As Cassander defended him of the accusations he had heard, the King exclaimed: “Thou hast come armed with all the subtilty of Aristotle, in order to oppose deceitful quibbles to just complaints.” Then he threatened both with the most terrible punishment if he discovered the stories to be true as reported. The face of Alex-

ander had such an angry aspect as he made his menace, that long after he died Cassander, who had become ruler of Greece, having by chance glanced at the statue of Alexander placed in the Temple of Delphos, remembering the danger he had once incurred, trembled in every limb. This circumstance led some to believe that Aristotle was guilty of finishing up Alexander by foul methods, and he was openly accused of having hidden poison in a horse's hoof and sent the same to Babylon in order to kill Alexander the Great.⁽¹⁾

THE PHYSICIAN PHILIP IS ACCUSED BY PARMENION OF WISHING TO POISON THE KING.

The King, covered by dust and sweat, was led to bathe his sore and wearied feet, charmed by the beauties of the waters of the River Cydnus. His feet had no sooner been placed in the stream, however, than his limbs, seized with a sudden trembling, commenced to stiffen painfully. Soon a paleness overspread his whole frame, and the warmth of life appeared to have entirely abandoned him. He was in an unconscious condition and near death when his henchmen removed him to an adjoining tent. Soon his respiration became freer, and the King opened his eyes. He had his personal friends and physicians summoned. “You see,” said he, “in what condition my misfortune has brought me, and I am surprised at this sudden attack. Darius has written me a superb letter, but all in vain, if I be not cared for according to my own will and judgment. Circumstances in my case will not permit either slow remedies or timid physicians;

¹ The ducks cry “*quack!*” as used in ancient satire, is not uncommon. “*Duck soup*,” or, in French, *bouillon de canard*, readily finds a Latin equivalent in the older classics.

¹ Littré has conclusively proved that the death of Alexander must be attributed, not to poison, but to an attack of intermittent fever.

better is it that I die promptly than have a lengthy illness. If there is, then, any remedy in medical art, 'tis that I seek—less to save my life, however, than to preserve my honor that is engaged to carry on this war."

Among the physicians, the more skillful present was Philip, an Acarnian by birth, who had come from Macedonia with the King and who appeared to be a faithfully devoted medical man. Attached to His Majesty from the time of his infancy and charged with the task of attending to the King's health, he not only was supposed to love his master, but in his conduct towards him was as a devoted nurse full of loyal tenderness. This physician promised a remedy that would not be violent, but at the same time active; with a simple potion he promised to cause an abatement of the disease. This proposition was acceptable to those who did not care to run any risks. It was to relieve the suffering rather than retard the malady. Arms and combats were before the King's eyes; he believed himself assured of victory, if he could only show himself at the head of his army; the three days' time during which he was to take the potion (ordered by the physician) were, however, too long to satisfy his royal impatience. Upon his entreaties, he received a letter from Parmenion, the most devoted of his courtiers, who warned him not to confide the care of his case to the physician Philip, as the latter was in the pay of Darius and had been bribed with the promise of a thousand talents and the hand of his sister.

This letter threw the King into a state of great perplexity; he was trustful and hopeful on one side, and filled with doubt and fear on the other, and, these ideas passed and repassed through his bewildered mind. "Shall I persist in taking this

potion and be poisoned?" he asked himself. "Shall I permit injury to myself and acknowledge that my own imprudence has merited the result? Shall I condemn in advance the fidelity of my physician and await the attacks of the enemy in my own tent? No! better, is it to perish by the crime of another than to die from fear." Thus he continued in sad mental uncertainty; then, not telling any person of the letter, he sealed the missive and placed it under his pillow.

Two days passed in these reflections, and the time that the physician had set was at hand. Philip entered with his cup and prepared the final potion. On his entrance Alexander raised himself on his elbow and extended his right hand holding the letter from Parmenion; he then sat upright, and with his left hand took the cup and fearlessly swallowed the potion; after which he ordered Philip to read the epistle, never removing his eyes from the physician's face for a single instant, in the hope of recognizing some indications of what passed in Philip's conscience. But, the physician, having perused the letter, showed more indications of indignation than fear, and throwing the letter and his cloak at the foot of the couch, said: "My King, mine life has always depended on thine, but it is to-day truly and sacredly a part of thine own existence. This accusation of murder charged against me almost destroys thine chances of recovery. Saved by me thou grantest me life. I now supplicate and conjure thee to banish all fear, and permit the potion to enter all thine veins. Give thine mind a rest; thou hast faithful friends, but they are indiscreet in their zeal, and are troubled by morbid terrors."

These words reassured the King, filling him with joy and hope. Addressing

Philip, he said: "If the Gods had given thee for choice the best method of experiencing mine feelings, without doubt thou could'st not have a greater happiness, but thou can'st not conceive what have been mine thoughts. I have received this letter, and have taken the medicine prepared by thine own hands; now, believe me, if any uneasiness remains, it is more on account of this insult to thine honor, than for an anxiety for life." Having thus spoken, he extended his right hand to Philip and clasped it fervently. Now, the effect of the medicine was so powerful, that its very first action seemed to confirm the accusation made by Parmenion, but when the effects of the potion spread through the King's veins, and all his body experienced its salutary influence, hope resumed its vigor, and soon the body, with a surprising promptitude renewed its pristine strength. Three days after this crisis, the King again rode at the head of his army.

ALEXANDER PUTS THE PHYSICIAN OF HIS FAVORITE, EPHESTION, TO DEATH.

From thence the King came to Ecban-tana in order to shape some affairs in his Empire; here, he made festivals and sacrifices as well as pleasing spectacles; during the latter, Ephestion, whom he loved as a brother, died of a fever, and his loss so greatly grieved the King, that in the anger of his affliction he did many things unworthy of a wise monarch, for, it is said, he crucified the physician Glaucus⁽¹⁾ who had treated his friend Ephestion, and

thought the death of the latter had been due to the doctor, and not to the ravages of the disease.

THE PHYSICIAN CALLISTHENES IS CON-
DEMNED TO DEATH FOR HAVING TAKEN
PART IN THE CONSPIRACY CON-
TRIVED BY HERMOLAUS.

"For thee, Callisthenes, Hermolaus, who, alone, found in thee a man, because he found an unprincipled wretch, I know full well why thou wouldst have him called. Thou wouldst smile to hear him in the face

this physician only owed his safety to the death of the tyrant. Gabriel Zerbi was unable to cure a Pasha in Bulgaria, and was sawed in two by order of the son of the deceased. Avicenna was a long time in prison for a similar offense. Queen Austrigilde, wife of King Gontran, asked as a dying request, and obtained the promise from her husband, that the two physicians who attended her in this last ailment should be killed and buried with her remains. Alexander the Great, put Callisthenes to death with tortures, for conspiring against him, along with Ptolemy Philadelphus, Amyntas de Rhodes, and Cineas. Eudemus was accused of having poisoned Drusus and turned over to the hangman. Vectius Valens, the lover of Messalina, wife of Claudius met a similar fate. Louis XI. was not very tender with his doctors; he maltreated those who, after one of his fainting spells, withdrew from the window where he reclined; and punished the physician of his father, Charles VII., for obliging him to eat during his illness. We know by what cunning subterfuge his own doctor, Jacques Coictier, avoided the cruelties of his royal master, by persuading the King that the stars read that he would die eight days after the death of his medical attendant, the aforesaid Jacques Coictier. Pierre Louis was much less fortunate. He read in the stars that he was going to be drowned, and left Venice, where he was residing, for Florence, where the river was very shallow; he there treated the Grand Duke Laurent de Medici, and promised his son that the father should be cured, but, contrary to his opinion, the Prince suddenly died, and his son, the new Duke, threw the doctor into a deep well, in order to fulfil the prophecy of the stars.

¹ These examples of cruelty were not rare during the ancient monarchies, and we can recall a certain number without difficulty. Manus was burned alive for permitting the son of the King of Persia to die. Haroun al Rashid ordered Gabriel Bakitchua to be executed because he had the awkwardness to reveal the danger of his position;

of this assemblage repeat with his mouth those injuries and insults thou so lavishly wasted on me at all times. If he were a Macedonian I might have permitted him to appear with thee as a master worthy of his pupil, but he is Olynthian, and cannot enjoy the same privileges."

After this discourse, Alexander bade the assemblage farewell, and ordered that the condemned should be put in their comrade's hands for punishment; the latter, in order to testify loyalty to their sovereign, caused the death of their victim with the most cruel tortures. Callisthenes died in the most horrible agonies, although he was a stranger to the plot hatched against the King, but his character was so honest that he was not adapted to the flatteries and deceits of Court life. No murder so much excited the hatred of the Greeks, as that of Callisthenes; they were very angry with Alexander. To them the victim was a philosopher of austere morals and rare knowledge, a physician who could call the dead back to life; and that such a man had been forced to submit to tortures without ever having been granted a trial, was considered an atrocious piece of cruelty. It is true that, later, Alexander repented his hasty action.

* * *

APULEIUS (Latin writer, 114 to 180 A.D.)

RUSE EMPLOYED BY A WOMAN TO RID HERSELF OF A DOCTOR WHOM SHE HAD INDUCED TO POISON HER HUSBAND.

But the brother was so indignant at the tragical and unjust end of his sister that he became unable to support his melancholy. A deep chagrin possessed him; his bile became heated, he fell into a profound delirium, followed by a burning fever, to

such an extent that it became necessary to attend him in turn. His wife, who had, in reality, not merited the name of spouse for a long time on account of not being faithful, went in search of a notorious doctor, already famous for his amorous exploits and of the trophies gathered by an assassin's hand. She promised this physician fifty thousand sesterces if he would sell her a subtle poison; and she thus bought the death of her husband. The bargain being completed, they agreed to cool the sick man's entrails by purging him of bile, and had recourse to that poison *par excellence* that the Ancients call the "sacred potion." Then in its place they substituted another that was not sacred, only for the greater glory of Prosperine.

The friends and relatives of the family were at the patient's bedside when the physician arrived and presented the sick man with his potion. But the audacious woman, wishing to rid herself of her accomplice in crime and not pay him the money she had promised, seized the cup from the doctor's hand, and, before all present, exclaimed: "No! most illustrious physician, you shall not make my dear husband drink this potion until you have yourself swallowed one-half, for I am afraid that you intend to poison him. You know full well that this precaution need give no offense to a person so well instructed and educated in medicine as yourself. Is it not natural that a devoted wife like I should surround her husband by all the tender watchfulness and solicitude that I, in gratitude, owe him?"

This strange and unlooked-for outbreak on the part of the wife in the presence of so many witnesses so embarrassed and dumfounded the doctor that, from the very fear of being deemed

guilty of the charge of poisoning, he swallowed a large portion of the potion. The grateful husband, taking the goblet, in turn swallowed what remained.

The wife's attempt being consummated, the physician desired to regain his own home in order to secure an antidote to neutralize the powerful effects of the poison he had taken. But the horrible wretch of a wife would not permit him to leave the room. "We will wait," said she, "until the potion has entered my dear husband's veins, in order to see the salutary effects of your medicine, doctor!" And it was only when in acute pain and wearied by his incessant pleadings that she finally permitted the physician to leave the house.

During the time of his stay, however, the poison had entered his system and secretly penetrated all portions of the unfortunate body. Already very ill and plunged into a state of drowsiness, he only arrived at his house after great effort. He told his wife his story and recommended her to claim at least the recompense due him for their double crime. Shortly, from the violence of the toxic drug, the very virtuous and over-obliging disciple of Æsculapius breathed his last sigh. The husband who had been poisoned lived a little longer, but soon he too was gathered to his fathers amid the hypocritical tears and deceitful lamentations of his wife, who had finished him in so tragic a manner. After the latter had been entombed for several days, during which time the widow clothed herself in deepest mourning, the physician's wife presented herself to claim the price of the double death; the latter widow seemed to be as cheerful as the former, and was greeted with every evidence of affection. The widow of the poisoned man promised to pay the doctor's wife without

delay, if she would bring her a little more of the poison made by her medical husband; to this proposition the doctor's wife readily consented, and returned with a large box of the drug. The wicked wife, of the first part, now proceeded to poison everybody around her, and one day invited the physician's widow and daughter to dinner and killed them both with the wicked physician's own medicine.

* * *

AULUS GELLIUS (Roman grammarian, 130 A.D.).

NOCTES ATTICÆ.

I had retired during the heat of summer to Cephissus, near Athens, in the country house of Herod, an illustrious person, whose place abounded in springs, and woodland with shade; there I was overcome with a diarrhoea and violent fever that forced me to take to my couch. The philosopher Calvisius Taurus, accompanied by several of his disciples, came from Athens to see me. I had then near my bedside a country doctor of the place, who endeavored to explain to Taurus the nature of my disease and the character of the fever. While talking, he remarked to Taurus: "You can see our patient is better, and judge of his condition by feeling his *vein*." This ignorance of language, confounding *vein* with *artery*, made the rural practitioner appear ridiculous to those present with Taurus, and their whispers and faces betrayed their thoughts.

Then Taurus, with his habitual kindness and gentleness, said quietly: "We know, my good man, that thou art not ignorant that this is a *vein* and the others only *arteries*: veins are never movable and are used only to draw up the blood; arteries, by their pulsations, indicate the

nature and force of fevers; and notice that thou hast expressed thyself rather to conform to vulgar language than from real ignorance. Thou art not the first physician who hath taken the vein for the artery. This is well; for the rest, show thyself to be more exact in practice than in language, and, with the assistance of the Gods, give us back our friend healthy and sound as soon as possible."

* * *

JULIUS CAPITOLINUS (Latin writer, fourth century, A.D.)

LIFE OF MARC ANTONY.

Not even a Prince is exempt from the attacks of scandal. Thus, it has been said that Marc Antony poisoned Verus himself; he cut a piece of sow's paunch with a poisoned knife and offered his brother the infected portion, keeping for himself the piece which was harmless; this was what killed Doctor Posidippus, who, they claimed, bled Lucius Verus at the wrong time.

* * *

AUSONIUS (Latin poet, 309 to 394 A.D.).⁽¹⁾

EPIGRAM AGAINST THE PHYSICIAN ALCON.

Languenti Marco dixit Diodorus haruspex,
Ad vitam non plus sex superesse dies.
Sed medicus divis satisque potentior Alcon
Falsum convicit illico haruspicium,
Tractavit que manum victuri, ni tetigisset,
Illico nam Marco sex periire dies.

¹ For epigrams imitated from Nicarque, see preceding foot-notes. Montaigne, who never let the occasion pass when he could insult doctors, as he accused them of having killed his bosom friend, Etienne de la Boétie, cites this epigram in a eulogy in his—so-called—"Essays."

PROSE IMITATION.

The aurispice Diodorus said to Marcus, when sickness had wasted strength, that he had only six more days to live. But the physician Alcon, more powerful in shaping human destiny than the Gods, convinced Diodorus that he had been deceived; he felt the sick man's pulse—that might have kept on beating if the physician had not touched it—and in an instant Marcus *lost* the six days promised him by Diodorus.

AGAINST THE PHYSICIAN EUNOMUS.⁽¹⁾

Languentem Cajum, moriturum dixerat olim
Eunomus, Evasit fati ope, non medici.
Paulo post ipsum videt, aut videsse putavit
Pallentem, et multa mortis in effigie.
Quis tu? Cajus, ait. Vivisne? Hic abnuit. At
quid
Nunc agis hic? Jussus Ditis, ait, venio.
Ut quia notitiam rerumque hominumque tenerem,
Accirem medicos. Eunomus obrigit. Tum
Cajus:
Metuas nihil, Eunome, Dico ego et omnes,
Nullum qui saperet, dicere te medicum.

PROSE IMITATION.

Eunomus one day said that Cajus, his patient, would not recover. However, the sick man did not die from the disease, more thanks be to the Gods than the skill of the doctor. Meeting his patient a few days later, the physician thought him a ghost, and exclaimed: "Who art thou?" Responded Cajus: "I am thy former client." "What!" exclaimed the doctor, in affright, "and thou still livest?" Cajus answered: "No; I come on a mission from Pluto to search for some physicians to take to realms below." At these words Eunomus became as cold as ice and shivered, when Cajus

¹ This is a mere imitation of Babrius. See the fable of "The Ignorant Doctor," on a preceding page.

continued: "Be not afraid, so far as concerns thineself, for there are no persons on earth so foolish as to consider thee a doctor."

AGAINST ALCON, A POOR DOCTOR.

Alcon hesterno signum Jovis attigit; ille,
Quamvis marmoreus, vim patitur medici,
Ecce hodie jussus transferri ex æde vetusta;
Effertur,⁽¹⁾ quamvis sit Deus, atque lapis.

PROSE IMITATION.

Alcon yesterday touched the statue of Jupiter and all the marble in the God experienced the virtue of the medicine. That is why he is carried out of the Temple feet foremost to-day, although he is a God and a marble God at that.

* * *

EUNAPIUS (Physician and historian,
4th century A.D.).

Life of Proæresius.

A PHYSICIAN, NEVER KNOWN TO CURE A
PATIENT, HAS ONE SUCCESS-
FUL CASE.

I had fallen ill at the Port of Pyreus, and was reduced to such a pitiable condition by fatigue and the sea voyage, that no signs of life were manifest in me. Then it was that the physician Æschines, whom chance had cast in our way, was called in by my friends and promised them my speedy cure. Nevertheless, he was known as a doctor, who not only had killed every patient that he had ever medicated, but some had even died at his mere appearance. My friends permitted this man to violently

force a remedy into my mouth that he had compounded; and no sooner had I swallowed the same — as my acquaintances present affirm—than I recovered speech and sight and distinguished those at my bedside. It was thus that Æschines washed away the memory of his many failures and ignorance as to the healing art, by this unique cure; and, after passing for a Divinity in the city of Athens, he went to the Isle of Scio, his own birthplace, where, ever after, he was considered as one of the greatest physicians of his age.

* * *

PRUDENCE AURELIUS (Latin
writer, 348 A.D.).

AGAINST SURGEONS.

Horretis omnes hæc carnificum manus;
Num meliores sunt manus medentium,
Laniena quando sævit Hipocratica?
Vivum secatur viscus et recens cruor
Scalpella tingit, dum putredo abraditur.

PROSE IMITATION.

You recoil in horror before the hands of the executioner. Do these doctors love you better when, as Æsculapian butchers, they commence their tortures? They cut into the palpitating flesh; the warm blood stains their scalpel when the gangrenous part is removed.

* * *

SIDONIUS APOLLINARIS (430
to 489 A.D.).

EPIGRAM.

It was Sidonius Apollinaris who indulged in the following *bon mot*: "An unskillful and industrious physician always kills his patients very officiously."

¹ The play upon words is here evident in the word *effertur*, as *efferre* signifies to *to turn into earth (dust)*.

MODERN LATIN AUTHORS.

EGINHARD (French historian, 772 to 844 A.D.).

LIFE OF THE EMPEROR CHARLEMAGNE.

His health was always good, except for the last four years preceding his death. He had about that period frequent attacks of fever, and became crippled in one foot. During his times of suffering, he humored his own whims rather than followed the advice of his physicians, whom he considered odious because they forbade him roast meats, to which he was accustomed, and endeavored to restrain him to eat only boiled animal foods.⁽¹⁾

* * *

RICHER (Early Latin historian, born about 970 A.D.).

History of my Times.

HOW DEROLD WAS DECEIVED BY A DOCTOR,
AND IN TURN TRAPPED THE
PHYSICIAN.

In those days died Derold, Bishop of Amiens, a man of great influence at the Palace and closely attached, by bonds of friendship, to the King. Derold was a most skillful practitioner of the medical art, and the story is told that, during the time he lived at the Court, he foiled and entrapped a certain doctor from

Salerno. Both the medical Bishop and Salerno physician were regarded as being educated as healers, but, to the King's mind, the Bishop was the best doctor of the two. The Queen, on the contrary, favored the Salerno man, deeming him more skillful. The King, by artifice, soon knew which one was best initiated in the secrets of medicine. He made them come often to his table, not telling them of his project, and proposed frequent questions, to which each could answer as he deemed best.

Derold was thoroughly versed in *belles-lettres*, and always decided his questions in a satisfactory manner. The Salerno man, although illiterate on many questions, had, however, a natural quick-witted brightness, acquired from long experience with the world.

The two disputants came together at the Royal table each day, by order of the Prince. One evening the discussion was on dynamics, thence into pharmacy, then to surgery, and finally into botany. The Salerno man was at sea and could not fully comprehend the conversation, but did the best thing under all circumstances, namely, maintained a discreet silence; but he conceived at the same moment a profound feeling of envy and hatred towards Derold, and resolved to poison the Bishop.

While feigning the greatest amity for the latter, the doctor placed a virulent agent under the ring-finger nail, and, as they were at table together, introduced the poison into the pepper sauce that he and

¹ The horror Charlemagne had for physicians prevented the calling in of medical aid in his last illness, and he died of pleurisy, which he only endeavored to counteract by a very strict diet.

Derold were in the habit of using. Derold, having taken some of the sauce, felt the poison insinuating itself in his veins, and became faint; but, his servants carrying him home, he used an antidote, thereby neutralizing the effects of the drug, and three days later presented himself at the King's table as usual.

When asked what ailed him, he coolly replied that he had a slight rheumatic fever, never indicating that he had any other affection.

His enemy never had the least suspicion that Derold had discovered the attempt on his life. Soon the assembled company again became convivial, and Derold, in his turn, holding some poison between his index and little fingers,⁽¹⁾ sprinkled it over the meat the Salerno doctor was eating. The poison soon spread and infiltrated through the latter's veins and destroyed his vital heat, and the victim was carried home by his attendants; there he immediately began to praise Derold as the finest doctor in all the world and the very master of medical art, and entreated that he might be summoned to relieve him. Derold administered antidotes, but the poison had gone so far that it entered the Salerno physician's foot, in the veins of which it formed a clot, so that for a long time he was crippled and finally had to call in the surgeon, who cut out the tumor.

* * *

JEAN DE SALISBURY (From 1110 to 1180 A.D.).

EPIGRAM.

When pain torments a poor patient, he

1 It is difficult to understand how one can hide and sprinkle poison held *between the index and little fingers*; the author evidently intended to write *annularis*.

is distracted by the acuteness of the manifestation as well as by the greediness of his doctor.

* * *

PETRARCH⁽¹⁾ (Italian poet, 1304 to 1374 A.D.).

Latin Works.

UPON GOOD AND BAD FORTUNE.⁽²⁾

Thou hast enjoyed for a long time strength and most flourishing health, to the great astonishment of those who know thee. In a few years of time thou hast been on three occasions given up by the doctors; three times hast thou trusted them with thine life, and thy safety is alone due to the aid of the Heavenly physician—it is he alone who hath restored thee to health.

PREFACE TO BOOK SECOND.

When physicians agree let us interrogate the patients. They pretend that *life is short*,⁽³⁾ and by their foolishness they often find further methods to shorten existence.

1 When we read all the sarcasm that Petrarch has launched against physicians, one cannot help but think him guilty of a vast amount of brazen effrontery when he writes in his first book of "Invectives:" "*It will be found that I have said naught against medicine nor true physicians. I have only, on the contrary, spoken in favor of Hippocrates against those enemies who decried his doctrines.*"

2 "De remediis utriusque fortuna." An anonymous author was inspired by this work to issue, in 1673, the "*Entretiens de Petrarque sur la bonne et mauvaise fortune.*" The author of this, as evidenced by many passages of his book, written in old French and unworthy of English translation on account of vulgarity, shows himself to have been a close imitator of Petrarch, as well as a follower of the Italian poet's prejudices against doctors.

3 Allusion is here made to the aphorism of Hippocrates, *i.e., Ars longa, vita brevis*, meaning

LETTER FROM PETRARCH TO POPE
CLEMENT VI.⁽¹⁾

The announcement of your fever, most Blessed Father, has caused me a trembling and chill in all my members.⁽²⁾ I do not say this to flatter you nor to imitate that satirical writer who says: "He weeps if he sees the tears of his friends," and yet again remarks, "I suffocate when he sighs," but shall rather imitate one spoken of by Cicero, who feared for the health of the Roman people because his own was involved therewith. My life and that of many others depends on yours. My trembling is thus far from being simulated, and, believe me, it is not the peril of others that so much troubles me, as that of my individual self. We, who depend on you, who trust in you even when you are sick, must assume an air of contentment, but we are truly unhappy. Nevertheless, it is always fitting to be brief, and, above all, under such circumstances, to shorten a discourse destined to reach Divine ears through the intermediary of a human mouth. I shall say but a few words, Holy

the life of man is short and the art of healing requires long experience.

1 The unedited translation of this letter, and the extracts that follow, are now, it is believed, rendered into English for the first time.

2 During this illness Clement VI. escaped from the assiduous care of no less than eight physicians. A satirical poet of the time attributes *this miracle* to a vow made by the Pope to the Virgin Mary:

"Questo e un voto che Papa Clemente
A questa nostra Donna a sodisfatto,
Perche da otto Medici ad un tratto
Lo libero, miracolosamente.

Which means in English that a vow made by Pope Clement was given to the Virgin Mary because she had miraculously saved him from the doctoring of eight over-attentive physicians.

Father, and bow, in spirit, full of love and veneration, at your feet.

I know full well that your bed is besieged by physicians, hence, my extreme fear. They are all, in fact, of contrary minds, those who have nothing new to say being ashamed to follow in the footsteps of the others. As Pliny has elegantly remarked, "Doubtless, all these gentlemen wish to make a name and great reputation by means of some medical novelty. They traffic with our lives, and in no trade more than theirs is there less importance in what they say, for they cannot be believed under oath, and no other set of men are as lying as physicians and at the same time more dangerous. We would not regard them except for the sweetness of hope for ourselves. Besides, there is no law that punishes an ignorance whose effects induce death; there is not an instance where they have been fittingly chastised. They acquire the little of the healing art they have at our expense; *our deaths constitute their experience*. Only the doctor has the right to kill a man with impunity."

Most Holy Father, regard this multitude of medical advisers as enemies ranged in battle array; I warn you to be on your guard, remembering the epitaph of that unfortunate who ordered that the words "*I died from too many physicians*" be inscribed on his sepulchre. The prophecy of Marcus Cato the Elder seems applicable to this age: "When the Greeks have invaded us with their literature, and *especially* with their doctors, all of us will be corrupted." But, while we dare not live without doctors, other more healthy nations live better without them. The Roman people themselves for a long period of time, and at their most flourishing epochs, according to the testimony of Pliny, existed for more than six hundred years without

medical aid, except that on one occasion it had a single physician, whose beautiful language, science and justice led him to be recommended. But the medical men, in time, forgot their profession, desiring by craft to escape from proscription. They wandered afoot through the groves of poesy and the flowery fields of rhetoric, as though their pretensions were not to cure, but to convince; they disputed with loud voices around the couches of the sick and before the very eyes of the dying, tangling with Ciceronian meshes the Hippocratic skeins, even taking pride in the fatal issues that gave them glory, not from material results, but from the vain elegance of their words.

For fear that such physicians only imagine that I have invented what may be said of them to-day, I would refer them to the name of Pliny as being a person who has written some little of medicine and much of doctors, and has told more truths than any person else; in this letter, I have taken him for my guide. It is he who speaks thus: "It is averred that as soon as one of them is distinguished by his beautiful talk he becomes the arbiter of our lives and our deaths."

But the fear that I am pushing my pen and drifting afar leads me to shorten my remarks. To conclude: If a physician excels not by his prudence, but by his elocutionary powers, avoid him as you would a hired assassin laying an ambush for your life as a prisoner. It is to such that may be rightly addressed the words of the old man Plautus to a certain loquacious cook: "Go away! they have given thee here leave to work and not to be a wind-blabber." Now, take good care of yourself, and that which will most marvelously aid the health of the body—keep up hope and be in good humor if you can—

as your safety and ours, with that of the Church, which is sick with us, depends thereon. May you recover.⁽¹⁾

INVECTIVES AGAINST A FRENCH PHYSICIAN.

Of the author's intention; why he has been forced to write. He asks the reader to excuse if he has written in any other fashion than has been his habit.

CHAPTER I.

Whoever thou mayest be, who from thine obtrusive barkings hast forced me to resume mine pen, until now left in repose, and who hath awakened, so to speak, the drowsy lion, thou wilt see that there are other things to be used than a slandering tongue that assaults the good name of another; behold one able to defend himself when armed and in the right. I avow the struggle between us is unlawful; thou hast stabbed me, and I have not been able to return the stroke. What renown could I have, however, in combating an infamous and mercenary tradesman? We do not contend for wealth or for empire; honor is the only cause for action in the case, and thou well knowest, without need of recalling that fact to thee, in what indigence and nakedness thou art in this respect when thou endeavorest to oblige me to lower mineself to a level I have never descended to and forced me to respond, for fear lest mine remaining mute to thine attacks might arouse contempt, and thou couldst plume thineself on mine silence, after being excused by me. So I shall reply to some few only of thine assertions;

¹ This letter, addressed to the Pope, protesting against the number of physicians, caused a medical diatribe to be launched against the poet, to which Petrarch responded in one of his four "Invectives."

yet only those worthy of a response shall be answered.

CHAPTER III.

For mineself, and I have not forgotten it, I censured not the occupation of physicians, but those who practice the same, and not all of these, but those impudent pretenders—those who always differ in opinion from others. Strange thing, forsooth! as if thou couldst render justice from the bottom of thine soul; thou and many others, thou art but angered and exasperated. I cannot tell what this signifies. One can attack philosophers of stupidity, one can harass poets without rhyme, one can mock orators without art, but never Plato nor Aristotle, never Homer nor Virgil, never Cicero nor Demosthenes would be included in the number; but when one attacks useless and ignorant physicians, all the profession trembles with delirious wrath. That of which I doubted nothing before, a little epistle has awakened; I said in this missive some particular things. Are none among them exempt from a common stigma? I cannot believe this, for I do not despair finding some physician who will wholly approve all that I have written and that which remains to be said—one true doctor who will find his own eulogy in the infamy inflicted on the undeserving of his profession, and who, I am fully persuaded, is remarked by all good souls who rejoice in belonging to the select few of physicians. If such were not mine conviction, I could not, following the words I used, have advised the Pope to choose a single medical man from the large number in attendance, not one who indulged in flowery flights of rhetoric, but rather one of undoubted science and medical skill. Rest assured, whoever thou art, thou wast not this man, for if thou wast not one

contented with the quarrels and ignorance of thine profession thou wouldst never have written me so insulting and impudent a letter. Thou hast been touched to the quick; hence thou hast cried out so loudly.

CHAPTER IV.

Now, that thou hast denied that physicians are in full disagreement among themselves, behold, this is the universal complaint of all the human race! Would to Heaven it were not so! I should have better loved to have lied, if it were possible to be deceived in this matter. I should have better loved to be wholly in error than to have said that thousands of men were placed under disagreeing domination such as is found in the variable uncertainties of physicians. Thou pretendest that in the last sickness of the Sovereign Pontiff thou wert all agreed. Pay attention. I beseech thee not to lie, although it is thine daily professional custom; lie not, especially before so many witnesses! Truth herself will cover thee with confusion! Perhaps after the health of our Holy Father was re-established thou didst agree; this no one doubts; but the Pope would have convalesced much sooner if he had lived, during the time of his sickness, at the most remote portion of India, far away from his many doctors. Oh! if that of which the presage gives me horror (for though the Vicar of God immortal is, he is mortal in himself), if he had paid the ordinary debt to Nature, in what profound and confused disagreements all his medical attendants would have fallen; how they would have differed as to his pulse, his secretions, his critical day, and—the remedies! Heaven and earth would have been discordant with medical clamor, ignorant as ye all were even of the cause of his

disease. Unhappy are the mortals who fall sick and confide their lives to the doctor's care! Christ, in whose hands is the salvation of man, saved his Holiness in spite of his physicians. Ah! ignorant ones, I beseech Divine aid to keep his Holiness as long as it may be necessary, as well for himself as for the good of the Church that he governs. Ye seek to appropriate that which comes from God, the merit of which too belongs to complexion and temperament. Ye endeavor to make the world believe that ye have saved the Pope from Death; now that danger is past ye agree on this point!

Thine effrontery would force me to speak of thee in verses and to give thee embalment for future ages, if thou wert not unworthy of being transmitted through mines to posterity, and thus have an abiding place in mine works. But why speak of color to the blind, why endeavor to make the deaf hear? Accomplish thine desires mechanically, I pray thee. Cure if thou canst; if not, kill all who apply to thee and demand thine fees when they be slain. No king, no emperor would dare do as much: to thee alone, arbiter of life and death, as thou art pleased to call thyself, all this is conceded blindly by the human species. Continue to use thine baleful privilege. Thou hast done well to give thyself up to a *trade* so full of security. If thine patient escape, he owes thee life; if he should die, thou art indebted to him alone as the experience is acquired at his expense. Death is the fault of Nature—it is the fault of the disease; life is a benefit bestowed only by thee.⁽¹⁾ Socrates was

then right in saying, on hearing that a painter had turned doctor: "It is prudent for him to have thus acted: he leaves a trade whose faults are displayed before one's eyes to take a trade where a little earth covers every blunder."⁽¹⁾

CHAPTER VI.

I cannot agree with the marvelous results said to be attained by physicians. What results? I ask thee this question. It is only by chance that thou art not placed among the modern marvels, for thou art said to be sick oftener than other men. Thou appearest in thine trade to be ever unwell. In the midst of immense populations thine visage alone would suffice, by its lividity, to indicate thine medical calling: from whence the proverb, "He has a doctor's complexion," a remark made when we see a person with a yellow tinted and withered aspect. It is a small miracle to promise those in health a physical condition not enjoyed by thyself. Yes, it would certainly be a miracle if thou strovest to lie only feebly. Perhaps another marvelous result noticeable is that whoever constantly give themselves up to the doctor's care are never known to feel well. Such are the results, not only marvelous, but absolutely stupefying, obtained by physicians. Mind, I do not speak of all, but of the many, and of thyself in particular.

CHAPTER XI.⁽²⁾

I abandon all the art of lying to doc-

¹ This is the same idea as that emitted by Nicoles, slightly modified. See preceding notes on this author.

¹ "On guerit, c'est notre art; on meurt, c'est la Nature," is an expression used by Casimir Delavigne in "*La Princesse Amelie*;" or, to render in English: "They cure, it is their art; they kill, it is Nature."

² These extracts from the different "Invectives" of the irate poet are, it will be noticed, a continuation of the same diatribe. They are only given as examples of early Italian satire on medicine.

tors, although falsehood may be of the most serious character and those who commit the same do so to the detriment and supreme peril of the over-credulous. If thou believest me not question the community of mortals; it has passed as an aphorism to such a point that when one knows how to lie cleverly it is said, "Thou liest like a doctor!"

SECOND BOOK.—CHAPTER I.

Thou owest me eternal thanks; with muteness, the man deprived of tongue like thou art, I have made of thee a babbler and a clown. O! very voluble disciple of Hippocrates! Thou knowest not all that for which mine pen is indebted to thee. I have well written thee up in prose, soon I shall immortalize thee in verse, in lisplings; I will compose for thee hymns of touching praise.⁽¹⁾ Our Age may indeed have had a prodigy—a man given to a manual occupation has striven to write a book. Who will now permit Roscius to write another treatise? He, so practiced in manual labor. But it was not remarkable that he acquired by his talents the high favor of the greatest personages, even the friendship of Cicero himself. He charmed our eyes; thou, by a different method, hast scorched mine ears. He forced all the world to be pleased with him; thou hath pleased no one. Who would now indignant at seeing an Apicius, master of the culinary art, write the precepts of his profession? Why not write in kitchens, as is permitted thee to write filth on privy walls and ceilings? Kitchens and privies have a close relationship, as both their names do indicate. Why not write a book in the midst of thine defecating festivals? Or compose it with

¹ In the interval between the first and second books of "Invectives," the physician attacked responded by another libel on the poet.

the dribbling sound of urine to assist thee?

CHAPTER II.

Thou art, it is said, a physician, and consequently a philosopher. Thou hast heard of Apollo, inventor of medicine, and of Æsculapius, who so improved the art. Thou hast, no doubt, heard of Pythagoras, the first of all who assumed the name of medical philosopher. Weep, ye inventors of this art! Behold, a modern ass crowned with wreaths of herbs has entered your territory, who not only declares himself to be a philosopher, but boasts of this philosophy! "Our philosophy," says he. "Behold it!" We hear these words and then approach, fearing the worst, even the end of the world, for it is written, "There shall be signs in the sun, in the moon, in the stars;" but the Evangelist forgot to add, "When an ass becomes a philosopher the Heavens shall fall."

CHAPTER XVII.

Now, I assert that thou art an *huppe*,⁽¹⁾ which is more philosophical, perhaps, than an ass. Certainly the Platonic Apuleius, whom I have mentioned in one of my *Invectives*, after having absorbed a philter, believed, or feigned to believe, himself, as Saint Augustine contends, changed into an ass; and, remembering this metamorphosis, thou mayest philosophize; no history ever before mentioned an ass philosopher. So, *huppe*, thou canst do as thou art accustomed to doing. Go, carrion thine-self among the tombs; go and ordure thine-self in other filthy things and leave true philosophy to real philosophers. Thou

¹ The *huppe* was a bird that sought its sustenance in ordure, from whence the proverb, "*sale comme une huppe*." This bird had the habit of not knowing its own excrement from that of other living things.

believest thineself to be a philosopher; do not deceive thineself. A philosopher, as the name indicates, is a man who loves wisdom; as for thee, thou art the slave of gold. Thou shouldst logically feel these to be contrary things, without great stretch of imagination. I conclude thou art wholly another thing from what thou thinkest.

CHAPTER XVIII.

To what dreams wilt thou not dare to indulge in thine philosophizing, thou who fearest not to treat us blindly; canst thou deny the confession of doctors or imbeciles if thou endeavorest to justify thineself? Thou hast commenced by denying their death-like pallor, as though thou hast not eyes, or as if thou hast not a mirror. Then, admitting this paleness, thou impute it to the care and anxiety the medical profession have for their clients; and, not content with this excuse, thou undertakest to justify it, paleness being, sayest thou, a philosophic attribute.

Good God! What can be sweeter to true sages than the title of philosopher, for, although this title may be falsely assumed, thou claimest, with other curious pleasantries, that thou hast the real pale complexion of the true philosopher! Certain it is that the master of amours attributes this palish cast of countenance to lovers, whence those verses,

“Every lover should be pale,
As ’tis the proper color of a lover.”

And yet another poet observes,⁽¹⁾

“The paleness of the lover sowed with violets.”

But thine paleness in thee is something far different, when ’tis known from what it springeth. This paleness is not from me,

¹ See “Odes of Horace,” Book III.

it is not that of an isolated writer among the ancients that attributes it to thee; it is the reality, it is public opinion, it is the scandal of the public streets. Wouldst deny this? Now, the most illustrious philosophers among the Greeks, as well as Latins, had most beautiful complexions and faces, as is known to all the world. But thou art not a philosopher, save from the erroneous opinion that thou might be one. Cease, then, thine care for the public interests, and accuse thine own cupidity for being what thou art; do not reproach thine paleness as being the result of thine hard studies, but rather attribute it to the habits of thine life. Thou who frequentest notorious places—gloomy, fetid, malarious; thou bathest in basins where matter overflows; thou inspectest the urine of thine patients and dream only of gold; it is not surprising, then, that living in feculent matters, greenish, blackish and yellow, thou art thineself, in complexion, of the same divine color.⁽²⁾

² We find other explanations relative to this subject in “*Les Medecins a la Censure*,” or “*Entretiens sur la Medecine*,” by a French physician of Besancon, as witness the following passage: *Meantime, adds Cleanthes, I cannot really understand how the majority of these languishing and half-dead creatures can have the face to call themselves doctors and relate to us the marvelous cases they have cured. Notice how their features mostly seem afflicted with dementia in their profound discourses. Do they not comprehend that all the intelligent world understands their mummery, when one can say to their very noses that ancient proverb, “Physician heal thyself?” In truth, even Sosander was himself sometimes ashamed at this sarcastic raillery. It has been said that it takes such kinds of long and solemn faces to frighten man and make him sick, so that one can thus secure practice. Another writer has said: “As doctors are the fathers of Death, so must they wear a solemn livery.” It has also been remarked that “Physicians are pale owing to the reproach of conscience; they have committed*

Epistles concerning Old Age.(¹)

PETRARCH TO BOCCACCIO.

Thou hast written me, I know not when, since I have lost the date and all memories connected therewith, that thou hast been gravely ill, but that, thanks to the doctors and the help of God, thou hast been cured. I am astonished that such a vulgar error as a belief in medical art hath penetrated thine mind. God and thine own good temperament have saved thee.

Rome would have retained its greatness and have remained what it was in former days had it ignored its doctors. Cato, who was a Sage, foresaw the result of a medical plague and enjoined mankind to avoid the consequences thereof; but this poor Globe of ours paid no attention to his useful advice, which is the common fate of all truth, and physicians invaded us.

Behold the splendor of the doctor's raiment, where luxury usurps the place of

many homicides." Some, again, think that the perfume of the bilious excrements and the color of the same is observable on the face of each dignified *Æsculapian*. Others, finally, insist that the visage of the average doctor is the veritable *facies Hippocraticam*. An ancient aphorism was, "*He has a doctor's face*," this being applied to every man whose visage was pale and thin. It is true, nevertheless, that in order to indicate one in perfectly robust health another proverb said, "*He hath the health of Galen*." Such has been from ancient times the logical contradiction of the wisdom of various nations.

I Only extracts from this missive are translated, and for full rendering from Latin into French the reader is referred to G. J. Witkowski. Petrarch's dislike for doctors probably arose from the death of his beloved Laura, who perished of the plague on April 1st, 1348; when, as Petrarch observes, "Her chaste and beautiful body was buried the same day, after Vespers, in the Church of the Cordeliers."

ordinary vestments, and robes of purple and fur-lined gowns adorn their persons. They wear glittering rings with precious stones,⁽¹⁾ with spurs of virgin metal.

They drive horses of milky whiteness with chariots of silver and harnesses of gold; but all the world cannot kill five thousand men, the figure required to attain this triumph.

Behold the credulity of patients, whose only desire is to recover health, which doctors most impudently promise them. Apollo they misrepresent in person.

The Ancients triumphed in killing their enemies; those that the doctors kill are our own citizens and friends. In antique times the warriors wore armor; these physicians are clad in togas. Another similarity, between physicians and warriors, those who had slaughtered the most men were always regarded as the most illustrious, while those doctors who attempt the most dangerous and doubtful experiments become the chiefs of all others and are pointed at with pride by the World. "He has seen much," cry the fools. "He is a doctor who experiments largely." There are none others save murderers who acquire such brazen assurance from long-continued habits.

I A Spanish epigram of the same period makes allusion to the habit that physicians had of wearing jewelry:

En el dedo de un Dottor
Engastado in oro vi
Un finissimo rubi,
Perche es siempre este color
El antidoto mejor
Contra la melancholia.

Or as rendered into English: "I saw a fine ruby set in gold upon a doctor's finger. This is because a red color is the best antidote against melancholy."

One doctor pretends that it is necessary to abstain from fruit, another from vegetables, without which in this soft Italian climate all nourishment would be wanting. Why should our agriculturists seek edible plants from other climates, if these plants are to become injurious to those who use them?

These so-called "Secretaries of Nature," these gentlemen who ignore nothing, abominate in others what they do themselves. One of them even condemned water most cruelly, inasmuch as he indulged in that famous epigram, "I find no use for water, unless it may be taken in acute fevers." O noble aphorism! I cannot believe this, inasmuch as even during winter nights I drink cold water in great quantities, and could not live without it.⁽¹⁾

I once heard a physician of great renown among us express himself in the following terms: "I cannot ignore the fact that I shall be treated as an ingrate if I lied in regard to an art by means of which I have acquired riches and many friends, but truth should be placed above all affection. I solemnly affirm and believe, if a hundred or a thousand of men of the same age, same temperament and habits, together with the same surroundings, were attacked at the same time by the same dis-

ease, that if the one half followed the prescriptions of doctors of the variety of those practicing at the present day, and that the other half took no medicine but relied on Nature's instincts, I have no doubt as to which half would escape."

I once said to a doctor, and a famous man of letters at that, with whom I was dining, that I was astonished that he used foods other than those whose use he prescribed, and he answered me with a most imperturbable face and without hesitancy: "If a physician conformed his manner of living to his prescriptions or his prescriptions to his manner of living he would run the risk of losing his health or his fortune." A man who cannot see the force of this maxim is an arrant fool.

I once heard a doctor of great renown, and really of profound erudition, not only in medicine, but many other sciences that threw me into close intimacy with him, answer my question as to why he did not practice medicine, thus imitating a host of men who were his inferiors, in the following words: "I fear to commit an impiety in the sight of God, who is witness of all earthly actions. I cannot connive at a fraud that costs the lives of the credulous vulgar. If people knew as well as I how many times their physician is hardly above mediocrity, knowing nothing of the disease, and oftener still, really doing injury to the patient, our present quota of doctors would be considerably less in numbers, and much less well paid. Most follow it as a trade with hardened hearts, preying on the credulity of the sick. They abuse the simplicity of such unfortunates whom they promise life, and then destroy for pay. As for me, I desire to deceive or kill no one, and will not enrich myself at the price of misfortune."

I We may recall the response made by Hippocrates to a person who was boasting that he had attained an old age without the aid of physicians. "It is," said the medical philosopher, "because you have followed a diet prescribed for you by doctors." Petrarch was very temperate in his habits, and drank only water, prescribing for himself and others, however, a bleeding with every change of Season. He derived from the profession he villified with so much malice all the information wherewith to keep good health and prolong his life.

I formerly numbered among my friends several real physicians, but to-day, I have only four medical friends left; one at Venice, one at Milan and two at Padua; all learned and pleasant gentlemen; all remarkably good talkers, discussing with warmth, perorating with a vehemence or with mildness, and they could kill you so gently that you would excuse them. They have Aristotle, Cicero and Seneca at their tongues' end, and will attract you with their classical knowledge. They also quote Virgil. I know not by what strange and peculiar chance these men know more of all other arts than that of medicine. The physicians of whom I have spoken, I receive as *friends*, when I am sick—*never as doctors.*⁽¹⁾

BOOK XII.—EPISTLE II.

Addressed to Giovanni (Jean Dondi), of Padua, an Eminent Physician.

The object of medicine is the restoration of health, I suppose, and not the grace of language; the duty of the physician is to cure, and not to perorate as to how Hippocrates and others healed people. We are ignorant, at least we are forced to add faith to what is said by Galen, his disciple, who exalted him above the clouds, where it was believed that Æsculapius resuscitated Hippolytus from the dead. Whatever opinion we may have of the Ancients who lived in remote times and places, think as you will, I speak only of modern doctors, and my own country, and repeat what I before said, that I have known some very eloquent medical men,

but as for the rest of their science, it is more polite to say but little. I know not by what hazard or culpable choice they are better acquainted with everything else than their own trade. For all that cures mortal maladies none knows better than yourself what wonderful efficacy they have; none attack their ignorance more than yourself, for ignorance is odious to no one more than a real savant. If I did not believe that of you, I should neither love nor esteem you, as I ever have done. You maintain silence, nevertheless, not from magnanimity, without doubt, but from motives of prudence, and a fear of increasing the hatred of your colleagues; meantime you have no desire to arouse, not only their enmity, but that of the entire world, for fear that the latter might arise in violence and exclaim: "Why do you deceive the human race? Why abuse the credulity and ignorance of mankind? Why sell poor devils' lies for the truth? Why, of all other classes, gain a benefit from homicide, a crime met with punishment, and for which impunity should be assured to no man?" These words would sound well coming with dignity from your mouth; but you wish to escape their hatred; fear or ignorance will make others mute. I can only cry out; none will hear me; the vulgar turn a deaf ear; other men are like you, and avoid dispute. Doctors assassinate, and none are accused, but assassination is not sufficient; they accuse themselves. With one it is cold; with another fasting that kills. Some men die from eating fruit, others from drinking water; but what matters it, they are dead. None depart this life without their own great faults; none recover without all the merit and honor is reflected to the glory of medicine.

¹ Louis XIV. one day said to Moliere, "You have a doctor who prescribes for you, have you not?" and the Satirist answered: "We converse together; he prescribes for me; I do not take his medicine, and hence recover."

POGGIO BRACCIOLINI (1380 to 1459 A.D.).

Parallel between Medicine and Jurisprudence.

BENEDETTO ANSWERS NICCOLO.

As Nicholas finished, Benedetto d'Arezzo made speech as follows: "Nicholas, by his slanders, has injured the dignity of the legal fraternity and their ministers. But this scorn and contempt for legislators by a physician is certainly undeserved. It is surely not the fault of the Laws or of the Civil Rights if there are men of obtuse minds and idle natures who practice at the bar of justice, or if some abuse the privilege by right more than by reason; all the earth is not fertile, and even in among the wheat we see the tares. But, Nicholas, what think you of those who practice your own profession? Are ours more injurious to mankind? Thanks to the stupidity of the masses, doctors kill more of the world than they cure; and, at the risk and peril of their unfortunate dupes, they make experiments of their art. Does absurdity and abuse not condemn your art as a science? Our errors, as you call them, are slight in comparison with yours; our imbeciles, whom you have mentioned, do not deceive only as to the worldly goods and wealth of their clients. Yours put human life in eternal danger. Our unworthy ones only snatch at mankind's purse. Yours cause the destruction of the body and the loss of worldly goods, inasmuch as they collect their fees from those who manage the estates of those whose lives you have taken. Ours only do injury in things of little importance. Yours injure in things of the most vital importance. Kings, Princes, Noblemen perish through your carelessness. Ours only imperil some legacies and inheritances. Your profession

causes the complete ruin of States, those practicing your trade being often much more apt to remove clods of earth than to exercise medicine. It is a ridiculous thing then for blockheads and boors, without literature, without knowledge, without ordinary intelligence, to have the unbounded impudence to profess the science of healing; the stupidity of humanity that has confidence in such and calls them to the bedside of the sick, not to care for them but to make the unfortunate more ill; it were better for the world had such men never been born, since they seem only capable of losing all. In our profession none are permitted to exercise law or to defend a case if they have not taken all the degrees in the science of Law. Medicine permits the entrance to the ranks of the first come, all those of the masses, the vulgar herd of artisans and servants."

FACETIOUSNESS OF ANGELO, BISHOP OF AREZZO, TOWARDS DOCTORS.

I desire to report here an adventure that befell Angelo, the brilliant Bishop of Arezzo, who belonged to the family of Ricosoli. He suffered with a grave indisposition, and the physicians called in enjoined him to take their drugs, otherwise he would run the risk of death. The Bishop had a natural horror of doctors, and refused; but finally, touched by the prayers and tears of his friends, he promised to take the physicians' prescriptions. Following their habits, they sent him their remedies for the day, which the Bishop promptly cast into the *pot de chambre* and then pushed the vessel under the bed. The doctors returned next day to visit their patient and to see the effects of their medicines; they perceived that the Bishop was free from fever and attributed the results to their remedies, reproaching his

Reverence for not taking their nostrums sooner, claiming that his health would have been immediately re-established thereby. The Bishop replied that they had a strength and most admirable virtues, as all that was necessary was to put them in the chamber under his bed and thereby recover his health. "What would have happened," added he, "if I had taken your concoction? Certainly I should have now been immortal!" He then ordered the physicians and their bottles to be put out of the house.

PHYSICIANS DRIVEN FROM ROME BY
PUBLIC DECREE.

It is not without reason, then, that in other times physicians were chased out of Rome by public decree, as it naturally happened, this trade being ignoble, that the vile and contemptible practiced medicine simply as an easy way of securing money. What, in fact, more glorious and admirable than medicine? You inspect urine, dejections, the sputa of the sick; you observe these with an oblique glance and wrinkled forehead, as if it were a very grave malady requiring an exceptional skill to cure. Then you feel the pulse, where you know the forces of Nature are felt. Then you collect together in consultation, and, after many disputes, come to the pharmacy, as you say, and most often by this time are in such a state of disagreement, so far off from saving the patient, that your science, that you pretend is infallible, certain, always identical with itself, appears to the contrary most changeable, variable, and inconstant. If your potion by chance rather than by its virtues does some good, you extol the cure to the skies; if it injures, all the injury is entombed along with the patient.

Pleasant Stories about Doctors.

There are many laughable stories about physicians, without relating those of the fools who do not make miracles like that doctor who found a lost ass by giving the owner pills to swallow, and that other physician who accused his patient of having eaten an ass;⁽¹⁾ as these anecdotes are not without humor, we place them among our *confabulations*.⁽²⁾ I could, did I so desire, repeat scores of stories relative to the ridiculous prodigies of charlatans, but will only relate a few.

STORY OF AN EMPIRIC WHO LOOKED
AFTER ASSES.

There was lately at Florence a man full of assurance and audacity who had no manner of occupation. This fellow read, in some book of medicine, the composition of certain pills reputed to be a sovereign remedy against different diseases, and then conceived the strange fancy of becoming a doctor, thanks to these pills. After manufacturing a great number, he left Florence and went around in its neighborhood among villages and farms practicing physic. He administered his pills indifferently in all kinds of maladies, and luck seemed to aid him, for several patients recovered after taking his drugs. The renown of this ignoramus soon spread among the common people of his own kind, so that a peasant who had lost a donkey came one day and demanded if the quack had no remedy to find missing asses. The empiric answered him yes, and then gave him six pills to swallow. The peasant paid

1 Allusion is here made to a volume of "Fæcetiæ" by Poggio, of which we reproduce but a few anecdotes.

2 "Confabulations"; this is the title Poggio gave to one of his books.

his fee and departed. During the next day, while seeking for his beast, the cathartic pills took effect and the peasant precipitately retired into a willow copse, where to his astonishment he found his ass grazing. From that time he lauded to high Heaven the science and pills of the quack: A true *Æsculapius* had been found, the common people rushed in from all over the adjoining country, they came in crowds to the doctor who had remedies that even found lost asses.

A MEDICAL RUSE.

An ignorant but very egotistical physician visited his patients in company with his student. He felt the pulses of the sick, as is the custom, and if he saw they were going to die he reproached them with the fault of having eaten a fig, an apple, or something else he had forbidden them to take. The patients avowed, most often, this doctor had the gift of second sight when he could so well divine the departure from a prescribed diet. His adroitness at this medical trick plunged the student into a continual state of astonishment; so the latter asked him if he recognized changes in diet by the patient's pulse, by palpation, or by some other equally as learned procedure. The preceptor, touched by the student's deference, finally deigned to reveal the secret. "When I enter the chamber of the sick," said he, "I cast around me a rapid glance, and if I see the remains of fruit on any plate or dish, no matter what, say they be chestnut shells, fig skins, nut hulls, apple cores, or anything a sick man might eat, I accuse his gourmandizing of having aggravated his malady, preventing my medicines from acting, and am therefore relieved of responsibility in case of a fatal termination."

Shortly afterwards the pupil, who had now become a doctor and commenced to practice medicine, undertook the trick of his former preceptor among his own clients: he accused them of not following his prescriptions and of having eaten this or that, as he noted around him any objective indications. One day he was called to a man, whom he promised to heal quickly if he preserved an exact diet. After prescribing a certain quantity of nourishment, he left, promising to return on the next day. When he came, according to appointment, the patient was very much worse; too ignorant or stupid to determine the cause, he looked all around him—no waste foods of any kind. He was embarrassed, but finally peeped under the bed; there he saw an asses tail, used as a fly switch, and immediately exclaimed: "I see why you are doing so much worse: you have eaten to such an excess that I shall not be astonished to find you dead to-morrow. No wonder you are sick, you have eaten a whole ass." The tail of the beast had indicated to his talented medical mind that the animal had been cooked like any other meat. This fool set the whole world laughing at his expense. (1)

PLEASANTRIES OF A PHYSICIAN WHO GAVE REMEDIES AT RANDOM.

The Roman custom is to send the physician a little urine from the patient, with one or two pieces of money, and thus obtain a written consultation. This physician to my knowledge wrote every evening upon strips of paper, what we call prescription paper, different remedies appro-

1 This very ancient story has been modernized in numerous ways, and an imitation in English rhyme is extant.

priate to all sorts of diseases and put them in a bag, well mixed together. In the morning numerous persons brought him samples of urine in order to obtain a prescription, and he always plunged his hand in the bag and extended the first prescription that he came across, remarking, in Italian, at the same moment, "Prega Dio te la mandi buona"; that is to say, "Pray God you may draw a good one!" This was a sad thing for those gentlemen whose health depended on chance and not on reason.

POGGIANA.

A nobleman one day observed that there were three kinds of men who ranked well in the world, *i.e.*, the theologians, because they corrupted religion; the lawyers, because they embroiled society in place of keeping order; and the doctors, because, under pretense of curing, they killed most often. A theologian, lawyer, and physician having heard this, proposed the following toast: "When we have killed off the nobility, we will content the rest of the world, and mankind will pass away as ever."

I learn from Darcier that Antonius Musa killed young Marcellus with cold baths. Those who bathe in cold water are called *psychrolites*. Seneca belonged to the number, and Pliny approved not the treatment. "It is not necessary to doubt," said he, "that all physicians traffic in human life to acquire reputation and invent something new."

* * *

TRITHEMUS (1426 to 1516 A.D.).

EPIGRAM.

To make an ignoramus a doctor, is to hang out a sign that means nothing; it is

like putting a circle of wine casks around the door of a house where no wine is sold.

* * *

JOVIANO PONTANO⁽¹⁾ (1426 to 1523 A.D.).

DIALOGUES.

Charon: But tell me, Mercury, I pray thee, do men at present live more gayly and in greater freedom than formerly?

Mercury: The priests live more gayly, chorusing at funerals; the doctors have a much livelier time, since they are permitted to kill with impunity.

Charon: Can it be that homicide is not punished with execution?

Mercury: Without doubt: but for physicians not only is the law absolute, but it even fixes their fees.

Charon: What iniquity!

Mercury: But no, the law of reason absolves doctors from all blame; it is not the physician who kills, it is those who invoke the aid and assistance of the doctor, and who pay for it dearly.

Charon: And the Civil Laws allow this?

Mercury: Most certainly it is permitted.

* * *

ERASMUS (1467 to 1536 A.D.).⁽²⁾

DIALOGUE VII.—UPON BAD HEALTH.

George: Are you in good health?

1 In Latin, Jovianus Pontanus, an Italian diplomatist and author of numerous moral works, poems and dialogues. He was a scholar whose elegant Latinity is unquestioned.

2 Erasmus, with his dialogues entitled "Ciceronianus," attacked the Church as well. He has been accused by Catholic writers of laying the egg afterwards hatched out by Martin Luther.

Levin: I should wish to respond in the affirmative, but am not as well as I desire to be; in fact, I never felt so badly. I feel like it is a misfortune to live under the domination of a Hippocratic monarchy, and all others who consort with those authorized and mercenary *man-slayers*, vulgarly known as doctors.

George: From what do you suffer? What has made you sick?

Levin: I know not; hence, my disease is all the more dangerous.

George: True, as you say; for the first step towards health is to penetrate the nature of the disease, following the proverb, "*A malady well understood is already half cured.*" Have you not consulted the oracle? Have you not called physicians to your assistance?

Levin: Oh, pardon me! I have already seen more doctors than I can count.

George: Very well! What did they say?

Levin: They practiced almost the same manœuvre as that of the lawyers of Demiphon in the comedy of "Terrence:" one of them says this; another one, this is not so; and the third has a mind to deliberate more slowly. My doctors only agree on one point—that is that *I am an object of compassion.*

George: But why not call in a real physician?

Levin: I fear that such a one, in place of doing away with the disease, may augment it; and also think such a one may poison instead of curing me.

George: But it is necessary to choose one who will assure you that he will positively restore health.

Levin: If I must die, I should best love to die quickly, rather than be tormented with too many drugs.

George: Then on your going out be

your own doctor; if you cannot trust a man who claims to possess the art of driving away diseases and restore your health, I wish that the *Almighty* may take you off in place of the doctor.

EULOGY TO FOLLY.

Among the sciences, those furthest off from *common sense*, which is only, after all, folly, are also the best paid. Theologians die of hunger; lawyers are frozen out; astrologers are mocked; dialecticians are held in contempt. Medicine is worth more than all these put together. Among doctors, as a rule, the most ignorant, the greatest charlatans, the most reckless practitioners, are always the fashion among persons in the higher social circles. The society doctor of the present day, or at least the majority of them, uses for rhetoric only the art of throwing powder in other people's eyes. After the doctors, in trickery, come the lawyers, the last most often being equal to the former. I do not care to criticise them, but all philosophers agree that so called medical science is the blunder of the ignoramus.

ADAGES.

The Scholiast of Aristophanes, in his *Plutus*, says that the bulls of Boetia were *scatophagic*—that is, eaters of excrement. Aristophanes applied this name to physicians, because in attending their patients they examined almost all the infected materials, the urine and the evacuations.

Erasmus said to a poor sick man who had had ten different doctors in consultation, and had not died after the ordeal, that it was sufficient to not only kill a sick man, but the most healthy man in the world (J. Bernier, *Essais de Medecine*).

Erasmus, who observed the doctors

during the illness of one of his best friends, who died, recognized that, in place of giving him relief by good remedies, they passed the entire time, as to day, in disputing as to the cause of his complaint. *Toto tempore quo decubuit ægotus, de genere morbi disputarunt* (Lesieur, *Reflexions sur la Medecine*).

* * *

THOMAS MORUS (1480 to 1535 A.D.).

EPIGRAM UPON DOCTOR NICOLAUS

Nunc video haud rerum tantum, sed et ipsa viro-
rum

Nomina, non temere sed ratione dari,
Nicolaus nomen medici est;—Qui convenit? in-
quis,

Hic potius nomen debuit esse ducis;
Dux populos armis vincit, sed et iste venenis
Et populum et fortes sternit uterque duces,
Sæpe ducem bello repetunt, bis nemo rebellat;
Huic uno dic, vero est nomine Nicolaus.

IMITATION.

I see now it is reason, not chance, that gives names to men, as to things; Nicholas⁽¹⁾ is the name of a doctor. "Is it not natural," sayest thou, "that it should be the name of a General—a military leader triumphing over nations by force of arms? But the physician, by means of his drugs, slays at the same time people and Generals, even though the latter be most valiant. Often the General is menaced, in his turn; the doctor never finds rebels. Yes, in truth, only a doctor merits the name of Nicholas!"

* * *

CLENARD (1495 to 1542 A.D.).

This Flemish philologist treats, in one of his works, the physician as a *sanicide*.

¹ Signifying *victorious* (from the Greek),

HECTOR BÆTHIUS⁽¹⁾ (1470 to 1550 A.D.).

HISTORY OF SCOTLAND.

King Reuthas having learned that a number of persons, suffering from wounds and sickness, had died, owing to the ignorance of their physicians, issued, at the advice of his councillors, a decree forbidding, in the future, any man taking the title of Doctor, unless he were known to have recognized ability, attested by long experience; this restriction was made with the death penalty attached as punishment. Before this time, among our countrymen, there had been no one especially skilled in medicine, the first come claiming to be physicians. Following the ancient custom of the Egyptians, the sick had been placed on the highways, or in some frequented public place, so that any passer-by could give medical advice, provided the party had been cured of the same disease himself or had treated others successfully. Under such circumstances no one thus qualified was allowed to pass the sick without speaking.

* * *

PALINGENIUS MARCELLUS
(Medical poet, 16th century).

ZODIACUS VITÆ.—LEO, LIBER V.

Consulte item, si opus est, medicum, vel clinicus ille,
Vel sit chirurgus; chirurgi certior est ars;
Nam quid agat certum est, et aperta luce videtur;⁽²⁾ etc.

¹ Scotch historian, Professor at the College of Aberdeen, a great friend and correspondent of Erasmus.

² The remainder of the Latin, *omitted*, can be consulted in the original work of S. J. Witkoski. The English translation will be confined to a short extract also.

IMITATION.

Consult then, if it be needful, the man of medical art,

Or else consult a surgeon, as surgery is more sure ;

For the latter, by comparison, is light in darkness apart ;

Yet those we call our doctors are physicians who should cure.

The latter look at the sick, and make a grave prognosis,

Gazing on urine, feeling the pulse, smelling the dejections,

Deceiving themselves to our injury, for we enter metempsychosis,

At least, that is the general rule, after their wise inspections.

Oh ! sing a psalm to the bald Levites and bald-headed doctors bold,

For the latter grab our purse for their crime, Forgetting God's punishment comes in good time,

Though they smile with joyous air sublime
As they jingle each dead man's gold.

* * *

JEAN OPORINUS(¹) 1530 A.D.).

LIFE OF PARACELSUS.

During the two years I lived with Paracelsus, he was given to much drunkenness and crapulation, so that he could not be seen sober more than two hours a day ; this was after his departure from Basle to Alsace ; yet this did not prevent his being admired by all the world as another Æsculapius. Meantime, no matter how drunk he might be, he never retired to rest without dictating to me his philosophies. During all the period I lived with him, I never saw him undressed for his bed ; he was

¹ Jean Oporinus was the private secretary to Paracelsus.

always so much under the influence of wine, and came in tired so late, that he merely threw himself on his couch, holding at his side a large sabre presented to him by the public executioner.⁽¹⁾ During his restless sleep he would rise in the midst of the night and whirl his sword around, striking strong blows on the floor and against the walls, so that I often feared lest he might accidentally cut my head off.

* * *

JEAN SECOND (EVERÆRTS)

(1511 to 1536 A.D.).

EPIGRAM.

Es simul medicus simul et chirurgus,
Cur ? Mittis stygium viros ad orcum
Et manu simul, simul et veneno.

IMITATION.

Thou art physician at the same time surgeon. Why ? To cut the throats of men as well as to poison them.

* * *

HADRIANUS JUNIUS(²) (1512 to 1575 A.D.).

ADAGES.

Nihil ad Medicorum arrogantiam (nothing approaches the arrogance of doctors).

Euphron, in one of his works against certain pompous and arrogant personages, remarks : "Thou art a great sophist, but sophistry is nothing in comparison with the supercilious frown of a physician."

¹ He held, it was said, enclosed in the handle of this weapon the spirit of a demon, his "Azoth," his most precious remedy.

² Adrien du Jon, Dutch savant, author of "The Adages of Four Centuries."

SIR FRANCIS BACON (English philosopher, 1561 to 1626).

COLLECTION OF APOTHEGMS, OLD AND NEW.

A minister being deprived of his charge, on account of improper conduct, said to some one that if he was prevented from preaching *it would cost more than a hundred men's lives*. One of his enemies accused him for this statement, and he was brought before the Judge to answer for his remark. "I have said nothing," observed the clergyman, "that I do not intend to execute; for, if they prevent me from acting as a minister, I shall become a physician, and feel assured that in this capacity I shall cause the death of more than a hundred men."¹

Dr. Johnson remarked that there were three material things touching the ills of the body, to wit, the physician, patient, and the disease; he said, when either of them combined, then victory was theirs—not even Hercules could prevail against them. If the patient and physician agreed together, the disease would disappear and the patient was cured; if, to the contrary, the physician and the disease agreed not, in such a case the patient is beyond hope of recovery; that if the patient and disease combined, adieu to the doctor.

¹ This anecdote has been imitated in the "Recueil d'apophtegmes anciens et modernes," 1646.

Un Ministre protestante
Par trop aimer et trop boire
Scandalisa tant et tant
Le severe Consistoire,
Qu'on alloit proceder a le destituer, etc.

This and other extracts from Bacon's works are re-translated from Baudoin, 1637, and do not strictly follow the English editions; the reader is referred to the latter for the original versions.

Thus medicine, we are assured, is so constituted that we may say that it is more treated than cultivated, and more cultivated than augmented. Observe the result of all the works of which it has been the object; it moves in a circle rather than advances forwards; for its many reflections may be seen, and but few veritable additions can be noted.

For doctors, thanks to their magistral decisions, have made us lose all the fruits of tradition and things well determined by experience, adding one thing, cutting off another, and changing all remedies, without following any other rule than their own caprice, and making varieties of *quiproquos* of the apothecary.

I remember a certain physician, a celebrated practitioner in England, who in religion was inclined to be a Jew, and who, by his prodigious reading, was a kind of Arab; he was accustomed to saying: "Your European doctors, it is true, are learned men, but do not understand how to cure their patients." Again, he remarked: "Your physicians resemble your Bishops, they have the keys to confine or absolve."

* * *

LATOMUS JOANNUS (Died in 1578.)

DISTICH ON JEAN MANARDI.¹

In fovea qui te peritulum dixit Aruspex
Non es mentitus; conjugis illa fuit.

IMITATION.

The soothsayer who predicted that thou wouldst perish in a hole did not deceive thee; it was that of thy wife.

¹ A celebrated physician of Ferrara, died in 1537, at the age of 73 years. "This Manardi," says Boyle, "was married while very old to a

GOLDAST DE HEIMINSFELD
(1576 to 1636.).

ON THE HONOR OF PHYSICIANS.

To sell rather than cure, that is medicine; it is nothing more than commerce.

* * *

VAVASSEUR (1605 to 1681).

Epigram.⁽¹⁾

VAVASSOR BURDELOTO ARDELIONI.⁽²⁾

Fama est ignaro quondam Jove, nomina multa,
Et sumsisse sibi munera multa Deos.
Se trino imprimis jactabat stemmate Phœbus
Nam Medicus, vates, et citharædus erat.
Ah! nimium est, inquit Superum Pater; eligat
unum
De tribus, una uni sufficit ara Deo."
Obtrectare nefas; sed quid retineret Apollo
Dudum animi pendens hæsit, et hærit ad huc.
Burdelote, eadem sors est tua, non labor idem
Nempe, trium superest optio nulla tibi.
Negligeris Medicus, vates contemneris; ergo
Vel nullus posthac, vel citharædus eris.

IMITATION.

They tell that, unknown to Jupiter, the Gods took names and privileges in abund-

young girl, and his sexual excesses killed him. The poets of that day indulged in much pleasantries at the doctor's expense, especially since an astrologer had predicted that he would perish in a hole. Manardi, in order to avoid this prediction, avoided all moats, pits, wells, etc, not dreaming of anything but the literal sense, and forgetting the allegorical; but he recognized by experience that it is not always the letter that kills, but that the allegory sometimes inflicts the fatal stroke."

1 Says Menage: "At this time we worked in Holland on the book of Vavasseur. I sent the printer this epigram, considering the same against the Abbot Bourdelot."

2 Doctor Pierre Bourdelot played the guitar charmingly. "Christina of Sweden," says one of her biographers, "having fallen sick, was induced

ance. Phœbus, in particular, carried three crowns at once: those of medicine, of prophecy, and as a cithar player. "Ah! this is too much!" cried the Father of the Gods, "she must choose one of three. A God should be contented with a single crown." Scandal is impious; but Apollo hesitated a long time what choice to make, and still hesitates. Bourdelot, thou art the same kind, but hast not the same difficulty: the choice no more rests with thee. Thou hast abandoned medicine, divination thou holdest in contempt; hereafter, thou shalt be nothing or thou shalt only be a cithar player.

BOURDELOT TO VAVASSEUR THE
RANTER (REPLY).

Non Medici, non me vatis jam nomine jacto.
Sum fidicen; laus hæc sufficit una mihi.
Hancine, quam coluit David, ego deprecem
artem?
His furias cithara flectere doctus erat.
Æmulus hinc, mala te quoties vexabit Erinnyes,
Admotam propius sollicitabo chelyn.
Sanarunt ægrum Davidica plectra Saulem.
Forte mea fies tu quoque sanus ope.

IMITATION.

I neither desire the name of physician nor soothsayer longer. I am a cithar player; that merit alone is sufficient. Why cast off the art that David practiced? He knew how to appease the furies by his

to call him to Sweden in 1651. The doctor's first care was to make the Queen renounce all studies; and, to ridicule in her eyes the then prevailing mania for erudition, he made two of his celebrated contemporaries, Meibomius and Naude, sing and dance for Her Majesty's amusement. One of these men was a distinguished writer on music, and the other on ancient dances. The treatment was a success; the Queen followed the advice of her agreeable ignoramus, as she called the physician."

By his intrigues at this Swedish Court, Bourdelot was obliged to return to France, where he ob-

music. I wish to emulate his example, and each time thine pitiless Erinny torments thee I will approach and calm thy spirit with mine lyre. David's instrument cured Saul sick; perhaps my talent may also give thee health.

* * *

OWEN (1771 to 1858).

Epigrams.

THE METHOD OF LIVING A LONG
TIME.

Si larde cujus esse senex, utaris oportet
Vel modico medice, vel medico modice :
Sumpta, cibus tanquam, lædit medicina salutem ;
At sumptus prodest, ut medicina cibus.

IMITATION.

No doctor, no medicine, no vexation,
plain cooking, if you intend to live to an
old age.

TO A SICK MAN WHO HAD MANY
PHYSICIANS.

Nunquam, crede mihi, o morba curabitur æger,
Si multus medicis creditur una febris.

IMITATION.

Why precipitate thine end? Is one
physician not enough to die with?

ON MEDICINE AND JURISPRUDENCE.

When true frugality with us remains,
And probity society props,
The world will all be free from pains,
Lawyers and doctors close their shops.

tained the Abbey of Massay, and took the title of Abbot, by which name he is best known. "It was this man," according to Touchard Lafosse, "who favored the libertinage of Princess Christina, and secretly treated her to prevent the consequence of her amours. It was she who gave him a hundred thousand crowns and obtained him his position in France. Most services rendered to the great are shameful, although the recompense is increased with the rank of the subject benefitted."

ON DOCTORS AND LAWYERS.

Furtum non facies ; Juristæ scribitur hæc lex ;
Hæc, non occides ; pertinet ad Medicum.

IMITATION.

The commandment thou shalt not steal
is addressed to lawyers ; thou shalt not kill
is intended for doctors.

TO A DOCTOR.

Thine patients should be much pleased
with thee, since thou treatest them with
such diligence. Thine first prescription
does the work, and they do not suffer long
thereafter.

* * *

STEPHANUS CASTRIENS (Later
Latin writer).

EPITAPH

On a physician, who, purging all his pa-
tients with a powder composed of tartar,
scammony and antimony, died from taking
his own remedy :

Nondum pulvis eram, pulvere pessimo
Demens conjicior pulverem in ultimum.
Quod si non fieret, pulvere pessimo
Plures conjicerim pulverim, in ultimum.
Evenit misero sic mihi talio.
Si nondum medicus pulvereus cavet,
Hospes tu medicum pulvereum cave.
Gaudet tartareo pulvere Tartara,
Hunc escam, moneo, Dæmonium voca,
Quam dat scammonium, quam stibium tibi.

* * *

LEODEGAR.

TO A DOCTOR.

Consilio atque armis multorum adjutus Achilles
In bellis fudit millia multa virum,
Tu sine consilio, nullis adjutus et armis,
Interimis ; virtus major Achille tua est.

IMITATION.

With the advice and help of numerous
companions, Achilles, in his combats, put

many thousands of men to death; but thou, in order to kill as many, hadst no need of advice nor assistance. Hast not thine valor, dear doctor, surpassed that of Achilles?

* * *

BAPTISTA MANTUANUS.

EPIGRAM.

Sunt et equestre genus Medici qui tangere venas
Nonnunquam illicitas audent, et ponere quædam
Non intellectis temeraria nomina morbis.
His et si tenebras palpant, et facta potestas
Excruciandi ægros, hominesque impune necandi.

IMITATION.

We see physicians, disporting themselves on horseback, who neither fear opening the wrong vein, nor giving without knowledge a name to diseases, where only Gout is present. Under the shadows of darkness, it is only they that have the right torture the sick and kill the living with impunity.

* * *

ZAMORENSIUS.

EPIGRAM.

Physicians are so self-interested that they would wish the world burned—provided *they have the ashes*.

PERISALTUS FAUSTINUS.

EPIGRAM.

Fecerit et postquam quidquid jubet ipsa medendi
Norma, nisi valeat subitoque revixerit æger,
Murmurat insipiens vulgus, linguaque procaci
Eloquitur de te convitia talia jactans:
“Hei mihi quam stultum est Medicorum credere
nugis!”

IMITATION.

When the physician has done all that rules of his art permit, if the patient be not restored to life and health, then the vulgar, in their stupidity, commence to murmur and cry aloud, overcome by their injury: “What folly to believe in the fiddle-faddle of doctors!”

* * *

UZENTIUS MAXIMILIEN.

EPIGRAM.

Chirurgus medico quo differt? Scilicet illis;
Enecat his succis, enecat ille manu.
Carnifici hoc ambo tantum differe videntur,
Tardius hi faciunt quod facit ille cito.

IMITATION.

In what does a physician differ from a surgeon? One kills with poison, the other with steel. The only difference between the executioners is that the latter operates quickly and the others are slow deaths.

ANONYMOUS WRITERS.

Epigrams.

Non clystere usus Phiscon tetigitve, sed ejus
Nomen ut in febre commemini perii.

IMITATION.

Phiscon neither gave me a clyster, nor
has he even touched me; but I had a
fever, recalled his name, and died.

* * *

Qui fuerat Chiron ceperat esse Charon.⁽¹⁾

IMITATION.

Who was Chiron has become Charon.

* * *

Impediunt certe medicamina plura salutem;
Non plures Medici, sed satis unus erit.
Nunquam, crede mihi, a morbo levabitur æger,
Sî multis Medicis creditur una salus.

IMITATION.

In order to cure, nothing is so effective
as to take many medicines; but it is useless
to take many doctors; one only is suffi-
cient. Believe me, nothing so embarrasses
a patient as to confide his health to a mul-
titude of physicians.

* * *

Qui plerumque ipso facitis medicamine morbum
Et diro ante diem ægrotos dimittitis orco
Scilicet hoc vobis indulsit opinio rerum
Una potens, clades inferre impune per orbem
Mercedemque alieno obitu, laudemque parare!

IMITATION.

It is you doctors who, most frequently,

¹ The connection between *Chiron*, the medical Centaur, and *Charon*, the ferryman, is obvious.

create the disease with your remedies, and
thus give the patient a premature death. It
is this opinion, this singular power, that
has given you the right to carry desolation
over the world with impunity, and draw
profit and glory from the death of others.

* * *

Jul . . . occubuit tandem, res mira tot inter
Carnifices, furcus vix potuisse mori.

IMITATION.

Julia finally succumbed; it was not
a wonder, since among so many exe-
cutioners a thief would have died.

* * *

AGAINST EUNOMUS.

Languentum Caium, moriturum dixerat olim
Eunomus; evasis fate ope non Medici.
Paullo post ipsum vidit aut vidisse putavit
Pallentem, et multa mortis in effigie
Quis tu? Caius? Ait, vivis ne? Hic abnuvit.
Atquid
Nunc ægis hic? Jussu Ditis, ait, venio.
Ut quia notitiam rerumque hominumque tenerem,
Accirem Medicos. Eunomus obriguit.
Tum Caius; Metuas nihil, Eunome, dico ego et
omnes
Nullum, qui saperet, dicere te Medicum.

IMITATION.

Caius was seriously ill; Eunomus de-
clared he would die; the patient escaped,
thanks to chance and not the physician.
Shortly afterwards Eunomus met him, or
rather he believed he saw a ghost, pale
with death on its face. "Is it thou, Caius?"

Dost thou still live?" said he. "No," responded the latter. "Where comest thou from, Caius—what wilt thou here?" And Caius answered, "I come on the order of Pluto; I am charged to carry doctors back with me." Eunomus was frightened until Caius said: "Rest assured and fear nothing; I declare, and nobody will contradict me, it is necessary to be a doctor."

* * *

Stercus et urina, hæc Medicorum fecula bina.⁽¹⁾

* * *

*Carnifici Medicus par est, nam cædit uterque
Impune et merces cædis utrique datur,
Judicium melius fuerit subiisse latronis
Gennadi Medicas quam pettisse manus.
Ille et enim cædes sancte execratur et odit:
Hic prætium capit et ducit ad Elysios.*

IMITATION.

The doctor is like the executioner: both kill with impunity and both receive pay for their work. It is better to deal with the brigand Gennadius than implore the assistance of a physician. The former

¹ Rabelais treats the same subject in a passage in his "Pantagruel," *i.e.*:

*"Stercus et urina Medici sunt prandia prima
Ex aliis paleas, ex istis collige grana."*

Or, translated, excrement and urine are the best meals for a doctor; one in the straw, the other in the grain. "You take this badly!" said Rondibilis. The subsequent verse is thus:

"Nobis sunt signa, vobis sunt prandia digna."

To us these are the symptoms, and are repasts most worthy of you.

In the "Serees" of Guillaume Bouchet we find a distich of the same sort, which alludes to Hippocrates tasting his patients' excrements, but we must omit the English rendering.

*"Quum dicam culo merdam ægrotante cacatam
Non ementito merdicus ore vocor."*

The play of words is here placed on "merdicus" and "medicus."

at least detests his crimes and curses them; the doctor derives therefrom a profit and glory.

* * *

*Si vis curari, sed morbo nescio quali,
Accipias herbam; sed qualem nescio vel quam,
Ponas nescio quo, curabere, nescio quando.*

IMITATION.

If you would be cured, I know not of what malady, take I know not of what herb, put it I know not where; you will be cured I know not when.

* * *

*Automno ægrotos qui plures sustulit uno
Quam folia Automni frigore lapsa cadunt,
Languibat medicus Themison, et flamina vitæ
Præcipit; ardebat scindere Parca manu
Corripuit dextra fuscæ regnator Averni,
Iratusque Deæ talia voce dedit:
Tunc illum stygias toties qui mittit ad undas
Millia tot hominem tollere stulta vales?*

IMITATION.

In a single autumn he killed more sick than the cold kills of leaves at the approach of winter. So Themison himself, in turn, fell ill and thought his end near; but the King of Hell seized Parca by the hand and said with irritated voice: "How? Here is a man who has oftentimes sent many thousands of men into our kingdom; do you wish him to die? Thou art a fool!"

* * *

BROCARD AGAINST PHYSICIANS.

*Le gros excrements et l'urine,
Ce sont des mets tres precieux
Pour les Docteurs en medecine
Puisqu' il les flairent en tous lieux.*

RESPONSE OF THE DOCTORS.

Sunt nobis signa, at vobis sunt fercula digna.

APHORISMS ON PHYSICIANS' FEES.

Exige dum dolor est, nam postquam cura.
Audebit sanus dicere; multa dedi.

IMITATION.

Require money during illness; with
health your client will only say, "I have
given you much already."

* * *

Dum dolet infirmus, medicus sit pignore firmus;
Ars quæ non venditur vilipenditur.

IMITATION.

While the patient is still feeble, then
should he be made to pay fees; they
always have a contempt for what they have
not paid.

* * *

Exige dum dolet; post curam medicus olet.⁽¹⁾

IMITATION.

Make thy pay while the patient suffers;
after recovery the doctor smells.

* * *

Empta solet care multos medicina juvare;
Si data sit gratis nil confert utilitatis.

IMITATION.

Dearly-purchased remedies ordinarily

¹ This aphorism is imitated from that of Hippocrates, who says: "Accipi dum dolet, quia sanus solvere nolet," or, in English, "Receive thy fees while the patient is sick; cured he will no longer pay thee."

Enricus Cordus has expressed the same idea, only in a more original way:

Tres medicus facies habet, unam quando rogatur,
Angelicum: mox est cum juvat ipse Deus.
Post ubi curato poscit sua præmia morbo,
Horridus apparet terribilis que Satan.

cure our patients; when given for nothing
they have no effect.

* * *

Tunc dicunt medici: da, da,⁽¹⁾
Cum dicit languidis: ha! ha!

IMITATION.

When the patient cries, Eh? Eh?
The doctor should remark, pay! pay!

* * *

LATIN PROVERBS AND SENTENCES.

Medice, cura te ipsum. Physician, heal
thyself.

Post-mortem medicus. After death, the
doctor.

Arrha mortis medici pretium. Fees to
the physician, pledges to the dead.

Multi nomine medici, re perpauca. We
count many doctors by name, but few in
fact.

Invidia medicorum pessima. It is among
physicians that the sentiment of envy is
most developed.

Nihil præter medicorum arrogantiam.
Nothing equals the arrogance of doctors.

Ubi tres medici duo athei. There are
two atheists out of three doctors.

Solis medicis licet impune occidere. Doc-
tors are the only persons who may kill with
impunity.

Medicina turpis disciplina. Medicine is
a shameful science.

He hath a physician's complexion.

Thou liest like a doctor!

¹ These last distichs are imperfect, and are
only reproduced because found among the others.

FRENCH AUTHORS.

FABLES OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

It is said that Hippocrates, before having the celebrated reputation which immortalized him since, having arrived in Rome in the time of Augustus, found, on his entrance, the whole city in mourning on account of the death of the Emperor's nephew; but that, being led to the palace, he poured a few drops of some plant's juice into the Prince's mouth, whereat the latter came to life. The Fabulist adds that Augustus, recognizing the greatness of this art, immediately ordered two statues, one representing his nephew, the other in the image of Hippocrates, the which were placed at the city's gates with an inscription announcing that Hippocrates, by his divine knowledge, had revived the dead Prince.⁽¹⁾

After this physician had lived in Rome a few months, honored by the Emperor to

1 It is difficult to show a more profound contempt for chronology and history than is evidenced by this fable. It was to Antonius Musa that the Athenians raised a statue, as this physician saved the life of the Emperor Augustus; but, later, this same physician was held responsible for the death of Marcellus, the Emperor's nephew, and his statue torn down by the enraged populace. Hippocrates could not have participated in such an affair, as he died *more than four hundred years prior to this time*. If the poetical author of this fable chose the father of medicine for this story, it was to increase, by the gravity of the personages named, the ridiculous comedy of the situation.

whom he had rendered such great service and adored by the people as a God, a woman suddenly appeared upon the scene and turned the adulation into laughing ridicule. She was Gallic, of illustrious birth and a rare beauty. Augustus, who sought to treat her with distinction, had given, to serve her, maids, and one of his palaces having a tower. She desired to know the beauties of the city, and her first moments of leisure were employed in glancing over the landscape; and one day, noticing the two statues, she asked why and on what occasion they had been erected. This being explained to her, and also being told of the inscription, she broke out into peals of mocking laughter and exclaimed: "I was ignorant up to this moment that Rome possessed a God, and am astonished to know that the people still die. Give me this little God for one day only, and I swear on my head he shall no longer make fools of humanity." According to usage, some one duly carried this remark to Hippocrates. Curiosity and self-conceit were aroused in the physician, and he wished to meet this singular woman who announced with so much assurance the power of her beauty, and so sought the occasion for an interview. But this was a misfortune, and what she had predicted was only too soon verified; for she was so charming, so diplomatic in conversation,

so full of grace and sportiveness, and pleased him so much, finally, that in spite of her defiance, which should have put him on his guard, he fell desperately in love. Soon this passion became so strong that, losing his reason and repose, he fell ill. The Emperor came to visit him. Ladies of the Court followed the example of His Majesty, and even the *fair stranger* called; but the latter had divined by womanly instinct the nature of the physician's affliction, and was careful to make her visit at the moment when they should be alone; and, in a tone of amity, she asked the physician some questions relative to his condition. He was only too happy for the opportunity to unbosom himself and avow the cause of his troubles, and naively confessed he was dying for love of her. This was all she desired; so, affecting a tenderness of manner and anxiety as to his woes, and with every appearance of good faith, she spoke to him thus: "I should expose myself to reproach, without doubt, if, being able to save a man of your merit, I should cause his death; but, while you have inspired in me all the love you feel for me, I will ask you, in the situation where I find myself, and with the number of eyes constantly watching my movements, how it is possible that I can give you any proof of my esteem? Deign but for a short time to be content with my regrets, and, with the assurance of the desire that I have to prolong your days, receive that which I shall give you by agreeing in advance to supply me with all the means that your tenderness can imagine."

She left him after thus speaking, as though blushing at her unmaidenly remarks. As for Hippocrates, he was filled with hope and health, and was soon in a condition to repair to the palace, there to resume his courtship of the beautiful Gaul.

"Ah!" said she, the first time they met again, "you have found means to reproach me? Have you found some way by which we can meet unknown to the world? What can we do?" And he responded, sadly: "Day and night I dream of you, but, up to this moment, I have discovered no expedient." Then she sighed and said softly: "Then you may thank me, since, having more ardor than yourself, I have in my search found a place of happiness. You know the tower of my house; come under its walls at night in a basket large enough to contain your body. I, for my part, while my maids are asleep, will come with my young lady cousin, who I know will serve in our interests; we will let down a rope from the tower, that you must fasten to the basket; as soon as you are in the basket we will lift you up to the tower, and then, without any intrusion or fear, I shall give you a lasting proof of my tenderness."

Hippocrates was so blinded by his passion that this stupid snare to him appeared the most adroit of stratagems. He overwhelmed the charmer with thanks, and left in haste to buy a large basket, awaiting afterwards with burning impatience the coming of the night.

Soon, when he deemed all the world asleep, he made his way to the foot of the tower with his basket, and found—imagine his joy!—the cord hanging from the wall. He was soon drawn up almost to the top, when the lady fair fastened the rope and he remained suspended in mid-air. She laughed at him from above, and, wishing him peaceful slumbers and happy dreams, retired to her room in the palace.

Now, in those days at Rome, they had a particular custom; it was this: certain crimes, which were not esteemed to merit death, caused the culprits to be suspended

for a whole day in a basket from a tower, and these baskets were known as *Judgment baskets*.

When Hippocrates saw the trap into which he had fallen he became desperate, and cursed his unholy passion a thousand times, and likewise despised all woman-kind; but it was too late, and he was obliged to pass the night in this uncomfortable situation. Day appeared and dawned upon his open shame. In vain he hid his face with his hands—all the world recognized him; during the whole day he was exposed to the gibes and hootings of the populace. The guards on the tower supposed the great physician was hung out by order of the Emperor, and refused to lower the basket. In the evening Augustus happily returned, and, surprised at seeing some one hanging from the tower without his orders, demanded who it might be. When they told him Hippocrates, he immediately ordered the basket to be lowered, announcing, in wrath, that the physician should be avenged. But, when he learned the true cause of this mockery and why his physician was thus served, he laughed so long and loud that the echoes of his merriment resounded from the many Roman hills.(!)

* * *

FROISSART (1327 to 1410).

CHRONICLES.

And thus, little by little, by the grace of God, the King slowly convalesced until

I An ivory tablet, belonging to the Abbey Saint Germain des Pres, reproduces the subject of this fable. Hippocrates, hat on head, is seen suspended in a basket from a tower, the fair dame and her young cousin smiling from above, below is noticed the Emperor, ordering his servants to lower the basket. See "Antiquite expliquée" of Montfaucon.

in good health; and when Guillaume de Harselli, his physician, saw His Majesty restored, he was joyous, and with reason, too, inasmuch as he had made a cure; and there entered the Duke of Orleans and the King's uncles, Berry, Bourgogne, and Bourbon, and the physician said to them: "God be thanked, the King is well again. I return him to your keeping."

Now, it was deemed wise to retain the services of Guillaume in the Royal household, and give him enough to content him for life; for this is the usual reward that physicians have who derive revenues from great lords and grand ladies and those of the other nobility they visit. And the physician was implored to remain in His Majesty's service; but he excused himself and said that he was already an old man, feeble and impotent, and that he was unable to submit to Court rules of etiquette, and that he wished to return to his native place. When they saw that it could not be otherwise, and not wishing to anger him, they permitted him to depart, and on his leaving presented him with a thousand crowns in gold. And they presented him with four horses and a chariot, to be used at any time he desired to visit the Royal Palace; but he only called on the King once afterwards, I believe, for he went to Laon, where he usually dwelt, and died a very rich man. He was a true medical financier, as he left thirty thousand francs. He was one of the meanest and most avaricious men I ever knew, and all his pleasure consisted in counting his money. At his home he only spent two Paris sous a day, but would visit and eat and drink as much as he could carry. All doctors are much like him.

* * *

OLIVIER BASSELIN (Fifteenth century).VAN DE VIRE.⁽¹⁾

One of my neighbors sick was lying,
 Gasping with weak and feverish breath.

"Alas! they'll kill me," said he sighing,
 "Forbidding wine, and barley water's death.

"Alas! my thirst is great, annoying;
 I'd like one drink before I die;
 Neighbor, with you one glass enjoying—
 Pray quickly to the vintner's hie.

"Dear friend my wish don't be denying,
 Always to me you've been a brother;
 Now for the wine in haste go flying,
 We'll take one parting glass together.

"Since Doctor's made me quit a-drinking
 My flask I've left you in my will.
 These doctors, I can't help a-thinking,
 Don't cure as often as they kill."

Thus spoke my neighbor sick and weary.
 Of wine we drank full bottles five.
 The fever left him blithe and cheery;
 He's still a-drinking, and alive.

* * *

PHILIPPE DE COMMINES (1447 to 1509).

MEMOIRS.—LIV VI., CHAPTER XII.

He had his medical attendant, who was called Master Jacques Cottier, to whom, in five months' time, he gave fifty-four thousand crowns, and the Bishopric of Amiens for his nephew, and other offices and lands to the physician's friends. The doctor was very rude to him, and one polite would not have used towards his valet such harsh words, and My Lord feared his medical attendant so much that

¹ This song has been translated before in an English version of "Le Moyen Age Medical" of Dr. Edmond Dupouy, published in 1889 in the CINCINNATI LANCET-CLINIC by T. C. M.

he dared not discharge him, and he complained to all those who conversed on the subject, but yet did not exchange him as he would have done with other servants, for the doctor always said to him most impudently: "I know full well you will discharge me some morning; but by — (here he swore a wicked oath) you will not live eight days after I have gone." These words so frightened My Lord that he only flattered and gave the physician more gifts, so that earth was an eternal Purgatory to His Lordship, seeing the great obedience and respect he had received from good and wise men.

* * *

PIERRE BLANCHET (about 1400).

LA FARCE DE MAISTRE PATHELIN.

Pathelin:

These doctors they have slain me!
 Through their vile drugs I relax!
 My belief is, though it pain thee,
 They mould mankind like wax.

(Version of Ed. Fournier.)

* * *

RABELAIS (1494 to 1553).

GARGANTUA.

Here note that his dinner was sober and frugal, for he only eat to prevent the gnawings of his stomach; but his supper was copious and large, for he then took as much as was necessary to maintain and nourish him. This then is the true diet prescribed by the art of good and safe physic, though a mob of blockhead doctors, befuzzled in the fooleries of Sophisters advise to the contrary.

PANTAGRUEL.

He came to Montpellier, where he met the good wines of Mirevalx and joyous company, and thought to study medicine;

But he considered the profession injurious, owing to its melancholy features, and that doctors smelt of clysters like old devils.

PANTAGRUEL.

He found the library of Saint Victor very magnificent, especially in books, which might be enumerated as follows: "The Bumsquibcracker of the Apothecaries," "The Kissbreach of Chirurgery," "The Cacatorum Medicorum."⁽¹⁾

PANTAGRUEL.

I do not remember to have seen you before now since you played at Montpellier with our ancient friends, Saporta, Guy Bouguier, Balthazar Noyer, Tollet, Jean Quentin, Francois Robinet, Jean Perdrier, and Francois Rabelais; when we acted the moral comedy of him who married a dumb woman.⁽²⁾ "I was there," quoth Epistemon. "The good man, her husband, wished she might speak. He dwelt on the arts of medicine and surgery and wished to have the tongue string cut. Speech recovered, she spoke so much that her husband returned to the physicians for some remedy to prevent her garrulity. The physicians said that while medicine had

means to make a woman talk, it had no remedy to make her hold her tongue. The only remedy would be to make the husband deaf. The old man became so deaf that he knew not what charms he had lost. His wife, seeing that he no longer listened, became enraged. The physicians demanded their fees, and the husband was so deaf he could not hear their demands."

PANTAGRUEL.

Theologians are appointed to guard our souls, who for the most part are heretics. Our bodies are kept by physicians, who all abhor and never take medicine themselves. We employ lawyers to look after our worldly goods, who never litigate with each other.

PANTAGRUELISMS.

Hippocrates very properly compares the practice of medicine to a combat and farce played by three actors—the patient, the doctor, and the disease.

It is difficult to conceive how a physician who neglects his own health can care for the health of others properly.

"Have a care, gentlemen!" said Pantagruel. "This great Brignenarilles, the swallower of whole windmills, is dead. He died suffocated and strangled by a lump of butter prescribed for him by the doctors."⁽¹⁾

1 The author of "The True Rabelais" (1697), probably Jean Bernier, himself a physician, is not very tender towards his professional brothers. Among other pleasantries addressed them in this work we cull the following: "A physician, Medicus, is a beggar Medicus." He translates the R of recipe, placed at the head of a prescription, "Take all you can." *Apropos* to "Cacatorum Medicorum," he remarks: "This book being the most famous one in the whole of medical literature, yet we might substitute 'Complacentiae Medicor.' For it is more in the pot and in clysters that physicians find the silver mines of Peru."

2 Rabelais here alludes to his farce of the "Dumb Wife," in which he was the principal actor.

1 These extracts are not translated at length from the original for the reason that as several excellent English versions of "Rabelais" are extant, and as the work is much given to medicine, it should be on every doctor's bookshelf.

ANONYMOUS (about 1486).

LA GRANDE DANSE MACABRE.

Death:

Physicians, urine boilers all,
 You see that here I reign.
 Death, Ancient Medicine, I call!
 Ee'n to command I deign.
 Come! 'tis Death doth thus command.
 You've others slain, 'tis sure;
 My orders ne'er you'll countermand;
 Doctors themselves can't cure.

The Doctor: Long time to the art of
 physick I have applied all my study. I
 have had science and practice to cure each
 disease, but I know that there is no herb
 nor root nor other remedy against Death.

* * *

CLEMENT MAROT (1495 to 1544).ESPISTRE AU ROY POUR AVOIT ESTE
DESROBE.

Et pour autant, Sire, que⁽¹⁾ je suis a vous,
 De trois jours l'un viennent taster mon pour
 Messieurs Brailon, le Coq, Akaquia⁽²⁾
 Pour me garder d'aller jusqu' a quia.
 Tout consulte ont remis au Printemps
 Ma guerison; mais a ce que j'entens,
 Si je ne puis au Printemps arriver,
 Je suis raille de mourir en Yver;
 Et en danger, si en Yver je meurs,
 De ne voir pas les premiers raisins meurs.

1 Equivalent to as true as.

2 Three amorous doctors of that period. The
 most celebrated, Martin Akakia, was physician to
 Francis I. Voltaire has immortalized his name
 in giving it to the pretended "physician to the
 Pope," who defends his companions in his in-
 genious diatribe against "the native of Malo,"
 otherwise known as Maupertuis. This physician
 bore the name of Malicen, but finding this name
 ridiculous, he turned it into Greek and called
 himself Akakia. The savants of that time, be-
 sides, were accustomed to Latinize their names,
 thus, Jean Loisel was termed Avis, Dubois was
 known as Sylvius, etc., etc.

* * *

BERNARD DE PALISSY (1510 to
1590).

TREATISE ON POTABLE GOLD.

In a small village of Poitou there was
 once a physician with about as little skill
 as any man in the Province, yet he was
 shrewd and made the population perfectly
 worship his talent. He had a secret study
 near the door of his house, and through
 the key-hole he saw those who brought
 him urine for examination. His wife, who
 connived with him in his trickery and was
 instructed how to act, always seated herself
 on a chair near the study, and interrogated
 the messenger carrying the urine, telling
 him that her husband was out visiting pa-
 tients, and then inquiring how long the
 servants master had been ill, the date of
 the illness, what portions of the body were
 afflicted, thus securing all the symptoms
 and effects of the malady. While the mes-
 senger, having responded to these queries,
 was waiting, the physician, who had heard
 all, would quietly slip out a back door and
 enter at the front of the house. Then the
 wife would say to the messenger: "This is
 my husband, you may speak to him now
 that he has arrived."

The messenger would then hand the
 physician the patient's urine, which the
 doctor would examine with a critical and
 learned eye, and, after discoursing on the
 nature of the disease, following the line
 laid down by the messenger's previous
 answers heard through the key-hole, would
 make a wonderful diagnosis and prognos-
 is. When the messenger returned home
 to the patient and recounted the doctor's
 wonderful medical acumen, it sounded like
 a miracle, that one should know the nature
 of a disease and all its particulars by
 merely looking at a specimen of urine, so
 that by this means the physician obtained

an enormous reputation and increased his wealth largely from day to day.

FOUNTAIN WATER.

Once on a time there was a physician who saw but few patients and fewer fees, and so, in order to secure practice, he threw some tasteless drugs in the wells of his neighbors in the town he inhabited, which caused all those who drank the water to have a diarrhoea, that tormented them greatly and led them to seek a physician's aid; those who consulted our worthy friend were given very valuable and high-priced remedies; they were told to drink good wine and eschew water for some weeks, and, thanks to this subterfuge, the before-named young doctor secured the practice of the village, his medical rivals not being able to restrain their patients' diarrhoeas so long as the latter drank water, which they advised, inasmuch as the new comer had given the opposite counsel.

* * *

ESTIENNE HENRI (1528 to 1598).

A SHARP PHYSICIAN.

I will tell you a story I once heard at my father's house in Paris while in good company, for we had with us a jolly physician, a man of fine reputation, who spoke as follows: "I once attended a big fat priest, and did my medical duty so well that in a very few days he recovered. Now, during the period he was ill, he promised me birds and dogs, but the moment he commenced to convalesce he was forgetful, even so far as not to thank me for my trouble in his behalf. Now I shall tell you how I forced him to pay me. Before leaving him I warned him that I feared he might have a relapse, and gave him a remedy to take two days after my

last visit. Two hours after taking this remedy he found, to his cost, that he needed a physician worse than ever before in his life. Finding himself in a dangerous state, he sent one messenger after another to find me; but I always forgot to make the visit, as he had forgotten to pay me. Finally, he sent a trusted servant with a handful of money, who said that his master prayed me, for God's sake, to call immediately, as he thought he could not live much longer without my aid. This servant had brought what was needed. I visited the priest, and three days later he was well. And I? Well, I received another handful of money."

AN AVARICIOUS DOCTOR.

Let me speak of a physician whose avarice exceeded that of any medical man I have ever met; I need not go long back to find him, since his name was Jacob Sylvius. God gave to this person a very profound knowledge of medicine, and had especially endowed him with the gift of language, for his Latin was most pure and beautiful; besides, he had all the special graces of theory as he had in practice, and was even called a second Galen. This man so let the spirit of avarice overcome him that he forgot God, in place of honoring him, and the great gifts derived from on High. He had many students, only five or six among the number being instructed gratis, the rest—there were several hundreds—paying him each a crown a month; but he took it so to heart that the few poor students paid him nought, that one day, at his lectures in Paris, he noticed among the students two of these poverty-stricken scholars who had not paid, and ordered them from the lecture-room; seeing they were unwilling to do so, he said to his other auditors that if they did not

put these non-paying parties out he would no longer lecture. What I have recounted is not hearsay, for I was an eyewitness to this scene. One of these poor scholars afterwards made the famous epitaph on Sylvius in such charming verses and graceful lines, that certain it is that the unbounded avarice of Jacob Sylvius could not be better described. The lines read thus :

Sylvius hic situs est, gratis qui nil dedit unquam ;
Mortuus et gratis quod legis ista, dolet.(1)

This person, aside from his avarice, had the misfortune of also being jealous of all other doctors, as was noticeable on the occasion when he delivered his first lecture after being made professor by the King ; for he reminded his hearers that there was no science equal to medicine, properly practiced, but that it was a great folly for poor men to undertake its study, alleging, among other things, that passage from Juvenal :

Haud temere emergunt quorum virtutibus obstat.
Res augusta domi.(2)

These ignorant and impudent doctors sometimes practice deceit with the apothecaries

who hold the recipes of learned physicians, marking the prescriptions for such and such a disease, without regarding whether the invalid has the same temperament, the same age, lives in the same manner, or be of the same sex, but nevertheless make all swallow the same medicine.

IGNORANCE IS BLISS.

Barbers and surgeons are close allied. One of the former once came to bleed me for a catarrh, and asked me if I desired to be *sacrificed*. "How," said I, "sacrificed? Certainly my doctor has not said that?" And he answered promptly: "Ah! no, your doctor did not say that, but I have *sacrificed* so many others skillfully that I find it an easy matter." Having thought to myself a moment, I knew that he intended to use the word *scarify* and not *sacrifice*, and told him it was not a barber's business to use the word *sacrifice*, although doctors could use the same without compunction.

* * *

NOEL DU FAIL (Sixteenth century).

Stories of Eutrapel.

THE APOTHECARY OF ANGERS.

"Go scratch yourself!" said Leopold, "and submit to all the other miseries inflicted by our fool masters with their *qui pro quo*, with which they abuse people and their purses; for that which is worth five sous they sell for twenty, not being subject to police restriction as to the price of their drugs. For these apothecaries have come to this, that they permit only the doctors to see the ingredients of the prescription ordered, saying they will do wrong if they show the same to their clients. But they err in this as they do in the selection of

1 Here lies great Sylvius, who never gratis gave,
He'd charge for reading these lines on his grave.

An imitation in French, by Guillaume Colletet, reads as follows :

De l' avare Dubois la science feconde
Ne donna rien pour rien tant qu' il vecut au monde,
Et si son corps s' anime encore pour le bien,
Il est sous ce tombeau qui murmure et qui gronde
De quoi tu lis ces vers sans qu' il t' en coute rien.

2 Those whose virtues meet the opposition of poverty have difficulty in elevating their rank.

plants and grains brought for their inspection: if these be new they attribute to them the most admirable powers and properties, whereas such herbs may be perfectly worthless. Witness that druggist of Lyons who lately sent to Champenois, the learned apothecary of Rennes, a package of black wheat (buckwheat) culled in our province, Sarrazin, together with a full description of its marked medicinal qualities and the price, which was a golden crown per pound. But the fraud was fortunately discovered; the packet was returned to the sender, with the remark that ten thousand rations of this rare drug could be furnished the Lyons druggist's horse at the same price, for in truth the poor of our Province had used this grain for over sixty years, owing to the poverty of the soil as regards the raising of other grains.

* * *

RONSARD (16th century).

ODES.

Dequoy sert donc la medecine
Et tout le gaiac estrange,
User d' onguens ou de racine
Boire bolus ou d' air changer,
Quand cela ne peut allonger
Nos jours contez ?

LES AMOURS.

(Sonnet.)

Ah! that I should bear him envy and hate—
This doctor who visits her morn and night.
He hath no reason for staying so late,
Feeling her warm limbs, round and white.

Such as he, for her life, have no care,
Though she, thinking different, obeys his behests.

He's wicked and handsome; she'd best beware
When he speaks, softly touching her breasts.

Oh! friends who nurse her in fever, see
That, for my sake, he be driven afar—
This doctor who fondles my sweet Marie,
Too zealous by half, as such men are.

Ah! this doctor who calls under false pretense!
I should be happy if once assured
That God should choose him to recompense
With my disease; and that she be cured.⁽¹⁾

TO PIERRE LESCOT.

Or, better still, by science money earn,
And knowledge by experience understand;
And take the trade Hippocrates once did learn,
Like him bring honor on your Native land.

Though from Apollo his proud heritage came
Of wealth, high honors and poetic fire,
More lasting e'en may ever be your fame,
Nor leave, like him, only a mouldy lyre.

Never be idle; learn e'en all you can,
The nature of our bodies, young and old;
No greater calling than to succor man;
Be gentle in your manners, and win gold.

EPITAPH ON RABELAIS.

Or toy, quiconque sois, qui passes,
Sur sa fosse repa des tasses,
Repa du bril et des flacons,
Des cervelas et des jambons,
Car si encor dessous la lame
Quelque sentiment a son ame,
Il les aime mieux que les lis
Tant soient-ils fraichement cueillis.

* * *

GUILLAUME BOUCHET (1526 to 1606).

Les Soirees.

OF MEDICINE AND OF DOCTORS.

A facetious story was much talked of during supper and afterwards, when doctors and their medicines were being discussed. This anecdote was a merry response that a doctor made to a monk who was laughing at and taunting him, as from times most ancient physicians have been

¹ This is probably an imitation of the letter written by Acontius to Cydippius, found in Ovid: "Me miserum quod non medicorum jussa ministro," etc.

the subjects of calumny. This priest once met the village doctor, and, stopping him, demanded medical advice in the following fashion; "My dear sir, I pray you tell me why it is, when I urinate, I also break wind, and cannot draw water without being flatulent?" The physician, who could barely endure such clerical insolence and affront, seeing that the priest was laughing mockingly, with an immovable countenance replied: "Reverend Sir, this is not surprising, since asses never do otherwise." The whole village was convulsed with laughter over this retort, and thereafter the priest maintained a dignified silence on the subject of medicine.⁽¹⁾ Latin and French epigrams without number were written on this story, as, for instance, we quote the following:

LATIN.

Quod mingendo cacat, medico testante Sacerdos,
Hac naturam asini conditione tenet.

FRENCH.

Un medecin par un Prestre raillard
Fut consulte dessus ce poinet icy,
Pour quoi pissant tousiours petoit aussi;
Cela n'est rien, dit-il a ce petard
Car bien souvent les asnes font ainsi.

At this same social gathering a physician remarked that none of his patients ever complained of him, and a friend answered: "Only too true; we believe that, since you have slain them! Yet, while medicine kills people, they will still continue to medicate, because, as Sophocles observes, 'The best and last physi-

cian in disease is Death.'" To this the doctor retorted: "That one should not speak evil of physicians who had never experimented." To which the tormentor answered: "If I had tried the experiment, I should not be here to speak evil, since I should have died."

"Is it not strange," said a physician, "that doctors lie so often, and that it is allowable for our profession to lie? We have a language and a writing different from the people, and do not always speak clearly when we visit our patients, who chide us if we know not Greek and call not diseases and remedies by unknown names. Greek, Arab and Barbarian physicians always speak Latin before women, and write in characters cabalistical, which the fair sex cannot read. This is for fear they may discover our recipes and no longer hold our remedies in high esteem, and also that our clients may have more respect for our art; since, should we call a root, herb, flower or bark by its common name, and in French, knowing the same to be a simple and a plant growing in their gardens, they would no longer have confidence; for, as Pliny observes, 'men have but little confidence in things they know,' while, if you speak in a strange tongue and people know not your remedial agents, the patients and their friends will think your medicines divine and from another world, the which so fortifies Nature that the malady is driven away.

One of our circle who used only a single medicine that he never took himself, for the reason that he feared an error in the prescription, remarked that the latter was filled with characters denoting weight and quantity; as thus, one ounce was written ʒi , and may be taken for a drachm when written thus, ʒi ; and only a symbol

¹ Dr. Witkowski's extracts from "Bouchet's" works are too voluminous for full translation, and in this, as in similar cases, only extracts are given. There is much repetition of ancient authors in later French writers, and wherever the same anecdotes are related it has been deemed best that such matter be omitted in this epitomized version of the original.

indicates too much or too little, and may lead a man to the next day of *All Saints' Day*, and this, too, without counting the *scruples* on one's mind or conscience.

So it came to be remarked that if a patient who had taken a physic did not have a passage, it was feared he would die; either that or the medicine was not good or the apothecary was to blame. Also, that many of the sick watch their chambers to see whether they have received value for the money expended on physicians and drugs. It was told, among other good things, that two doctors, visiting a patient in consultation, demanded his *pot de chambre* to view the *fecal* matter contained therein, saying: "How do you feel now, sir? The excrements are scanty and the urine light." The sick man urinated, and, thinking the physic had operated freely, responded: "It looks to me as though there was enough for both of you;" whereat both doctors left full of laughter."

* * *

PASQUIER ESTIENNE (1529 to 1615).

LETTER TO M. TOURNEBUS, COUNCILLOR TO THE PARLIAMENT OF PARIS.

No man idolizes physicians more than I, when I am sick; and I only consider their art doubtful when I am well. You will, no doubt, find this remark singular, that I respect the art of those whose practice is so uncertain, and by chance should say that, sick in body I am healthy in mind, and that healthy in body I am sick in mind, to the contrary I will say, if the aphorism is true, that the habits of mind and body sympathize; being sick in body, I am feeble in mind when I worship the medical profession.

MONTAIGNE (1533 to 1592).

Essays. (1)

BOOK I. CHAPTER XXIII.

HE SCORNS MEDICINE IN DISEASE. TO WHAT HE ATTRIBUTES ITS SUCCESS.

We call a physician good when a patient recovers, as though it were their art and not good fortune that had taken part in the performance. I believe in all of them the better and worst whatever they will; for I have, thank God! no commerce with them. I am different from others, as I always have a contempt for the profession; but when I am sick, in place of consulting them, I hate and fear them more than ever; and answer those who insist on my taking medicine, to wait until I have recovered my strength and health in order to more ably sustain the risk and chances offered by their drugs. I leave everything to Nature, knowing it can best resist with teeth and claws the assaults on my health.

They say that a new comer, named Paracelsus, has changed ends, reversed all the ancient rules of medical treatment, and maintains that, up to this time, medicine only caused mankind to die. I believe this statement can be readily verified, but to test this theory with my own life would, I fear, not be the acme of wisdom.

I believe that I owe my father my calculary diathesis, since he died greatly afflicted with a large stone in his bladder. Thus physicians may excuse my freedom of speech, for by this same infusion and fatal insinuation I inherited my hate and contempt for physic; this antipathy is, I

I Montaigne's *Essays* are so well known to English readers that only a few excerpts from his voluminous remarks against physicians will be quoted.

repeat, hereditary. My father died at the age of seventy-four years, my grandfather at sixty-nine, my great-grandfather at eighty, and none of them ever tasted a drop of medicine; and none of them ever took anything even in place of drugs. Medicine is cultivated by practice and experience, that's my opinion. My ancestors all abhorred medicinal remedies, through some occult but very natural inclination, and my father had the feeling so intensified that his fear of drugs amounted to horror. My paternal uncle, Seigneur Gaviac, a clergyman, delicate from his birth, but who nevertheless lived on for sixty-seven years, once fell into a continued fever, and was declared by his physicians, who were called in the case, to be dying. This good man, frightened though he was by this medical sentence, replied, "I am dead then." But God made a lie out of the doctors' prognosis.

There is no nation that has not existed several centuries without doctors, and these ages were always the most prosperous and happy.

There was once in Egypt a very just law, by which a physician, taking a patient in charge, did so at the sick man's expense for the first three days, but after that the illness was at the doctor's expense.

It was a good commencement for doctors, that ancient Gods and Demons were the authors of their science.

It is a good thing for the doctors and a good rule for their art, as in all other fantastic, vain, and supernatural arts, that the patient should be filled with human assurance. This rule induces a fancy for the most ignorant and unknown physicians. The choice of drugs is mysterious and

divine: the left foot of a turtle, a lizard's urine, an elephant's dung, blood from the right wing of a white pigeon, and other articles destined to increase our miseries.

Who ever saw a doctor use the recipe of another physician without cutting off or adding to its ingredients? By this very action they betray the fact that they consider their reputation, and consequently their profit, more than the interests of their patients.

Lately, at Paris, a gentleman, following the orders of his doctors, was cut for stone, and no more stone was found in his bladder than in my hand. A Bishop, a friend of mine, was constantly solicited by his medical advisers to have a lithotomy performed, and I myself assisted in securing his consent, having faith in the doctors' diagnosis; when he died and we opened him, he was found to have only kidney trouble. Yet, to me, surgery seems more certain, since one can see the manner in which the cure is done, and there is less of conjecture and divination; in this art there are no *speculum matricis* to enable one to see brains, lungs and livers.

Herophilus attributed the original cause of disease to the humors; Erasistratus to the blood in the arteries; Æsclepiades to invisible atoms permeating the pores; Alcmaeon to the exuberance or deficiency of corporeal strength; Diocles to the inequality of the elements contained in the body and the character of the air breathed; Strabo, in the abundance, crudity, and corruption of the food we take; Hippocrates to the spirits.

How often do we see physicians blaming each other with causing the death of a patient. Which reminds me of a disease

that once prevailed in my neighborhood, and was for several years a very marked and dangerous malady. The plague, which cost an infinite number of lives, having subsided, one of the most famous doctors in the country wrote a book on the disease, and declared that if the sick had not used bleeding so much damage would not have occurred. Now all authors allow that there is no medicine that has not injurious properties.

I honor physicians, not following the precept for the necessity, but for the simple love of themselves, having known many really dignified and honorable men in the medical profession who were not wholly unworthy of being loved. It is not themselves I object to, but their art, and do not blame them so much for profiting by mankind's stupidity, for the whole world encourages their practice.

It is the fear of death and pain, with impatience at illness, or furious and indiscreet haste for cure, that blinds us, and pure cowardice that renders our belief so soft and manageable.

What Homer and Plato say of the Egyptians, that they were all physicians, may be said of all modern peoples; there is no one who does not boast of a remedy of some sort, and will not hesitate to use the same on his dearest friend or nearest neighbor.

The promises of doctors are wonderful, for they have to foresee the different and contrary symptoms, which often oppose each other and yet have a necessary relationship; as in heat of the liver and coldness of the stomach, they persuade us that their medicine will warm the stomach and cool off the liver. They also have drugs

that go right to the kidneys and from thence to the bladder, without the drug losing its original medicinal virtues while passing through this difficult road before rendering service at the point for which the occult properties of the drug are destined to act. There are agents that dry the brain, others that moisten the lungs. From one prescription having all such wonderful properties bestowed by a number of ingredients mixed in one draught, we may hope that the virtues may divide, and, freeing themselves from the confusion, perform their intended parts. And imagine how easy it is to confound, alter and corrupt this liquid melange when the compounding of this prescription depends on a druggist, to whose mercy we must abandon ourselves with all due faith in the attempt to prolong life.

King Ferdinand sent his colonies to the Indies, but wisely forbade them to take any scholars of jurisprudence, for fear that the law would not tend to populate the new land, as being a science that would generate quarrels and property discussion; believing, with Plato, that "it is a bad thing for a country to have lawyers and doctors."

Plato has rightly said that to be a true physician one should have passed through all the diseases he professes to cure, and through all the accidents of which he is to judge. It is right that he even have the pox if he wishes to know how to treat it.

We should suffer patiently the penalties of our condition; we are born to become older, feebler; to become sick in spite of all medicine. The first salutation a Mexican gives to his child when it comes from its mother's belly is this: "Little one, thou

hast come into this world to endure all pains, to endure and keep silent."

If your medicine be voluptuous, accept it; it is always pleasant. Neither wait for its name nor its color, if it be delicious and appetizing; for pleasure is one of the vanities of profit.

* * *

PIERRE BRANTOME (French historian, 1540 to 1614).

VARILLASIANA.

Brantome having the gout, a physician was found who offered him a secret specific as a cure; arrived at the house of the illustrious patient, he asked for an interview. A lackey went to tell his master of the doctor who claimed to be able to cure every case of gout, and Brantome made his appearance as quickly as his disease would permit, saying to the lackey: "Take the doctor's carriage into the court-yard." The physician interrupted him by remarking: "I have no carriage." And Brantome exclaimed: "Is it possible that *you cure gout* and have no equipage? I have no need of your services, sir!" And he abruptly left the room. This was as much as to proclaim that no man having a sovereign specific for gout—that cruel, tormenting and very common affliction—could be unable to have a carriage and four.

RODOMONTADES ESPAGNOLES.

A doctor went to see a Bishop who was sick, but very large and fat; and, after leaving his apartment, met some of the patient's friends, who demanded how the sick man was, and the physician replied simply: "*Pluguiese a Dios que fuesse tal mi macho!*" which, in English, is "Would to God my mule was as healthy."

A Spanish physician, having incurred the displeasure of a widow lady, one day charged a horse jockey, in her presence, of bringing him *una mula que fuesse viuda* (a mule widow). The jockey responded: "*Como, cuerpo de tal! Os burlais de mi senior doctor? Nunca fue mula viuda*" (How! You mock me, doctor? There never was a mule widow.) To which the doctor retorted: "*Digo yo quetenga tres condiciones de una viuda; que sea gorda, andadora y comedora.*" (I wish to say that a widow has three qualities, *i.e.*, to be fat, a gadder-about, and mangy.)

THE QUEEN OF SPAIN AND ELIZABETH
OF FRANCE.

One year before she came to France—to Bayonne—she fell sick, and in this extremity she was left in the hands of the physicians. On which a young doctor, of Italian birth, who was much in fashion at Court, was presented to the King, and said if permitted he would cure her; the which His Majesty permitted, as she was supposed to be dead. This physician gave her a little medicine, which being taken, suddenly and miraculously made the color mount to her face, and she soon commenced speaking, convalescing shortly afterwards. Whereat all the Court and the common people of Spain blocked the roads with their processions, going and coming, from the churches and hospitals, in honor of the Queen's recovery; some were so joyful that they went about in their shirts, others went bareheaded, offering up prayers of praise and chants of thanksgiving; honoring God by fasts and bodily penance, and many other good and truly holy devotions, so well did they believe that their intercession, tears, and shouts were heard by God, and had done more to effect the cure

of this Princess, and the doctor's work was overlooked.

AMOURS OF PHYSICIANS WITH THE WIVES
AND DAUGHTERS OF THEIR
PATIENTS.

I knew also another of the great houses of Spain, where a Countess preferred to piously care for her daughters, besides other relatives of her husband; but this lady was sometimes an invalid, and much subject to the orders of doctors and apothecaries; and the young ladies were sometimes ill, with pale complexions, irregularities, and fevers, and it so happened that two of them fell sick and an apothecary had them in charge. He certainly thought of his drugs, but more of his *amours* with one of his fair clients, a young and beautiful Frenchwoman, formerly virtuous and the fiancée of a French Prince. I knew this girl, who certainly merited a better lover, if such a thing was her absolute necessity, and when this maiden could no longer conceal her shame the rascally apothecary gave her antidotes.

I knew another aristocratic girl who had been treated as a daughter by Queen Marguerite of Navarre. By mishap she became pregnant, but her cunning apothecary gave her a potion that permitted her to void the fruit of her womb piecemeal and painlessly, so that she never had the least trouble; and she afterwards married a very gallant gentleman of the nobility without her husband ever dreaming of her former shame. What useful physicians! for they give remedies to make the unloosed appear as virgins — even as maidens.

I knew an empiric of Spain whose practice was to put leeches on women's natural parts, which animals by their action

made blood appear, so that when the unsuspecting husband returned at night, finding his wife's condition, he could exclaim: "*L'onor della cittadella e salvo!*" (The honor of the castle is saved.)

We all know Ronsard's poem of the physician who came night and morning to gaze on the beauties of his fair patient under pretense of treating her fever. I was once very jealous of a doctor who treated a beautiful dame with whom I was in love, and he was so confidential with her that I would have given half the Realm to have been in his place. These doctors have peculiar advantages in their relationships with men's wives and daughters when they desire to take an amorous advantage.

I know another noble lady of great distinction belonging to the house of one of the most famous of Spanish Grandees, to whom her physician one day said her husband was impotent, that her marital relations should be different; and she replied: "I leave all in your hands, Doctor." Some months afterwards she remarked to a lady friend who had heard of her recovery: "Yes, my family physician restored me; in fact, I may candidly state that the continuance of my good health depends on the Doctor."

I knew a celebrated doctor, Le Grand, of Paris, who came one day to visit Baron de Vitaux, who was sick from a love affair, and both of them discussed Court *amours* and told stories that made my hair stand on end. I expressed great surprise at the doctor's seeming indifference, and remarked: "Ah! you doctors know too much, but don't appreciate the good things offered you." To which he retorted: "Truly, truly we know good things, for

we well know all secrets; but I am old and have said to God and his merciful Son, 'I leave such things to those who are younger.'"

* * *

CARDINAL DUPERRON (1556 to 1618).

PERRONIANA.

I wish that all the Universities of Medicine, like Cæns and Rheims, except Montpellier, were abolished, for they are only asylums for ignorance.

* * *

BEROALDE DE VERVILLE
(1558 to 1612).

THE APERITIVE MEDICINE OF RABELAIS.

The Cardinal du Bellay being sick in bed of hypochondriasis called in physicians to consult and apply a remedy for his relief. He was advised by the learned concurrence of doctors to take an aperient decoction put into syrup to render it palatable. "This, Your Reverence," said they, "will *open* you freely." At this juncture Rabelais took a sudden resolution, leaving the other consultants still cackling in consultation in order to earn their fees. Going into the courtyard of the Cardinal's palace he sent the steward and collected all the old keys he could find; these were placed in a pot suspended by a tripod over a fire and duly boiled; but, to be economical in his medicine, Rabelais was slowly fishing the keys out of the boiling water when the crowd of consulting physicians descended the stairs, and, seeing the great Rabelais thus engaged, viewed him with wonder and enquired why he was thus employed. "Gentlemen," he replied, "this is my prescription for hypochondriasis; there is

nothing more aperient than keys, they *open* everything. If you are not contented with my formula, send to the arsenal and borrow a few field pieces; that would be the last resort after the trial of these *apozemes*."

* * *

RENE DESCARTES (French philosopher, 1596 to 1650).

EXTRACT.

For the rest, I do not wish to dwell at length on the progress that I hope the sciences will make in the future, nor make the public any promises that I am not assured will be accomplished; but only wish to say that I have fully resolved to employ the time that yet remains for me to live in nothing else than acquiring a knowledge of Nature, so that we may fix more absolute rules for medical practice than have been observed up to the present time.

METAPHYSICAL MEDITATIONS.

Physics, astronomy, and medicine, and all other sciences which depend on the consideration of composite things, are extremely doubtful and uncertain.

The conservation of health has been all my life the principal purpose of my investigations and studies, and I do not doubt that there may be means of acquiring much more knowledge concerning medicine, which has been greatly ignored up to the present epoch; but the "Treatise on Animals," upon which I have meditated, yet have not been able to finish, is only the entrance to reach this knowledge, and I have not boasted of accomplishing this task. All that I can say at present is, that I was of the opinion of Tiberius, who wished that men who had attained the age of thirty years having had personal experi-

ence with diseases resulting to their injury or profit, should really be our doctors. In fact, it seems to me there is no one who has observed but would argue that it would be careful to be on guard that only the most learned doctors should be employed.

* * *

BERTRAND HARDOUIN DE SAINT JACQUES (1598 to 1648).

MEDICINE AND THE STAGE.

We have only an extract to cite from this comic writer; but his name is worthy to figure in this recital. He made his medical studies at Montpellier, afterwards abandoning the science of Hippocrates to become a strolling opera player, at which occupation he acquired great renown by his mingled simplicity and volubility, without an equal. At the death of Gautier Garguille, he came to Paris and made an engagement with the Bourgogne Theatre Troupe, under the name of Guillot Gorju. "Now," says Sauval, "as he had studied medicine, his ordinary mission upon the stage was to ridicule medicine, which he did so well that physicians themselves were convulsed with laughter." He preceded Moliere in his drolleries against the Medical Faculty, and perhaps even inspired many ideas, for our greatest French comedy writer was one of his auditors, as he was often brought to this Theatre by his grandfather.

After imitating his own profession for about eight years, he again left the stage and practiced his profession at Melun. "A strange determination," observes Didot, from whom we derive these details, "which of itself is very amusing, and might be even taken as another method of ridiculing the Faculty."

A contemporary thus paints his portrait: "He was a large brunette, with dark, sunken eyes and flat frog nose, who resembled a huge monkey, and did not even need a mask on the stage, as he wore a natural one."

* * *

ADAM BILLAUT (Seventeenth century).

FOR CURING SCIATICA.

To cure thee of sciatica, that doth confine,
So that in bed no movement thou durst make,
Take two jugs full of faggot-juice from the vine,
But use it as I say, and cure thine ache.

With thine two fingers rub this remedy sure
Upon the surface where thou feelest pain.
Drink all that's left and find a certain cure,
For thine disease will never come again.

On only faggot-juice rely, and in its virtues have belief;

For if thou callest a doctor for thine care,
Most dangerous things he'll give for thine relief
And will not cure thee even then, I'll swear.

* * *

DULAURIER (Seventeenth century).

FACETIOUS PROLOGUE.

Apropos, gentlemen, I desire your presence greatly, and still more of that than of the doctors, taking in refusing and refusing in taking; for, *dicendo nolo accipiunt pecunias*, in that they pull out the imposthumes from their game bags at the expense of the entrails of our purses; as a recompense of scrawls on paper they render our secretions clearer.

REGARDING MEDICINE.

Another of my designs, to be physician in place of lawyer, is my hope to run the list in *spatiosum fertile et lucrativum campum Medicinæ*; I expect to find for this purpose a huge Andalusian mule with long

hair and a short tail.⁽¹⁾ Some persons have told me that every doctor must stick his nose *sur les ragousts du derriere*,⁽²⁾ as we say in French. But why not? When *ex re qualibet bonus odor lucri*, providing my purse be always full of money, and that it serves not for an arsenal of pistols but of *pistoles*,⁽³⁾ it makes no difference to me how a patient's stools smell. What say you gentlemen? Are these not good arms against the toothache?

* * *

JEAN FRANCOIS SARRASIN (Facetious author, 1603 to 1654).

GOULU'S LAMENT.

Poor Goulu on his bed was lying
When Master Clements, doctor in the case,
Taking his hand, said, "Goulu, thou art dying,
For if thou dost not eat, run is thine race.

Eat then! nor longer be a stubborn fool.

A little of this bread but try?

'Tis I who speak, I of Hypocras school."

And Goulu, weeping, made but this reply:

"I see full well thou canst not cure;

It likewise makes me sad to hear thee lie.

Thine medicine no longer I'll endure;

'Twas thine vile potions that have made me die.

Ah! too much medicine mine belly fills.

In law a wise man never consults shysters,

Nor should he ask advice of quack that kills.

Adieu to thee my Clements, with thine clysters."

THE SEINE SPEAKS TO THE FOUNTAIN
DE FORGES.⁽³⁾

Oh! seducer. My fountain Beauty!

Truly, I find thee vain.

Nymph of health-giving waters,

Knowest I'm the River Seine?

1 The reader is referred to a French dictionary for the translation.

2 A piece of money.

3 A medicinal mineral spring.

I, who bear on my broad bosom
The greatest ship that floats;
Know, little spring, I've the power to wreck
The strongest of mankind's boats.

Full well I know thou hast vaunted
Of thine qualities rare and fine;
Dost thou wish to be my rival,
Like the haughty River Rhine?

Better it is for thee, fair nymph,
That my subject thou appear,
And mingle thy gentle streamlet
With my current strong and clear.

For if my wrath be once aroused,
The storm waves on my crown
Will inundate the country fair,
And my rivals shall go down.

Ah! be gentle, then, and modest,
To my chidings hang thy head,
'Twill all be for thy profit,
Or I'll drive thee from thy bed.

Certain it is, spite thy boastings,
That those who thy waters drink
Cannot be cured of their maladies,
Since they are not sick, I think.

'Tis a very silly thing, forsooth,
To strive to engender rude strife,
By claiming to give a man a cure,
When he's never been sick in his life.

Those who have faith in thy virtue,
Who from my stream hold aloft,
Are the quack doctors from the Faculty,
Debauched by thy waters soft;

And if ever Destiny leads such men
At Charenton's baths to dwell,
I trust they will never return to me,
But go drink with Pluto in Hell.

* * *

DE CAILLY (1604 to 1673).

ON A MEDICAL POET.

Roc was a poor doctor, but a good poet he,
Who epitaphs wrote on his patients when dead,
Recording their good deeds and fair histories,
Thus treating Life's record when Life's flame
had fled;

While, as to the sick, he ne'er cured their ills,
And none e'er recovered that to his hands
came—
For Roc, as a doctor, killed all with his pills,
But Roc, as a poet, built them "Temples of
Fame."

ON AN IGNORANT DOCTOR.

Orontes is quite ill; he who once injured thee.
But Faustus treats him; thou avenged will be.

EPIGRAM.

Some claim that the medical art's to be feared,
Some say they more medical learning desired;
Yet, on grave reflection, it oft hath appeared
We can stop all complaining whene'er it's re-
quired.

EPIGRAM.

Renault seemed always to be at Death's dark
brink.

How did I cure him? That's what I shall tell.
I bade him laugh, dance, sing, and take his drink,
And with one single remedy made him well.
This remedy? He dropped his doctor, Phil,
For doctors are the cause of every ill.

EPIGRAM.

Your precious person, so I learn to-day,
Abandoned was unto four doctors' care;
Of following them too blindly best beware—
Which leads me in all kindness here to say,
Four doctors are a malady hard to ease,
E'en ten times worse than is your own disease.

* * *

CHARLES COYPEAU (1605 to 1679).

BURLESQUE ADVENTURES.

So, seeing her fall ill, as much from too
great application to the affairs of her State,
as well as to the little physical exercise she
took, and knowing that abundance on
which the poor live is that which kills the
rich, and to how many perils the lives of
the great are exposed, and that she might
be attacked by the stupidity of the doctors,
I composed a piece not against medicine,
but against the ignorance of physicians.

PENSEES.

It is said that astrology and medicine
carry in themselves the monstrous seeds of
that terrible error, Atheism. This may be
true, because the majority of those who
follow these professions give much to Na-
ture; all speak of the infancy of the world,
and, if we judge the past by the present,
as believing our philosophers and physi-
cians, we cannot but doubt its infancy,
seeing its decay; because, if history lies to
us, we would not see that mother Nature,
who in the early ages made great, strong
and robust men, does not employ the same
material to-day, for now we only see pyg-
mies. Physicians say the same thing;
and, when they have slain a patient by the
method of Galen and of Hippocrates, they
excuse themselves by this decay of the
world and accuse the debility of Nature,
who, with simples and with minerals, no
longer inspires at the present day the same
potency that was remarked in the times of
their masters.

* * *

SCARRON (French dramatist, 1610 to
1660).⁽¹⁾

THE HYPOCRITES.

Have thyself carried to the hospital,
and, when thou hast found the advice
therein given thee, scorn not that I give
thee; it is, my poor Montafar, to not call

I Scarron was not *cul de jatte*, a cripple seated
in a bowl, as has often been claimed, as he him-
self said:

Je suis cul de jatte, a qui membres tortus
Font grand mal a toute heure.

Scarron had general chronic rheumatism, with
ankylosis and deformity of the joints, that gave to
his body the form of the letter Z. His long and
painful sufferings and the lack of efficiency on the
part of medical remedies in his case explains and

in a doctor, for he will forbid thee to drink wine, not knowing that this alone, without the fever, is capable of causing thy death in twenty-four hours.

INNOCENT ADULTERY.

She called those of her domestics who had the care of Dom Garcias, and left the chamber when the surgeons entered. The satisfaction of mind is the sovereign remedy of a sick body. Dom Garcias hoped from the words of Eugene a happy termination for his love. So that his soul, chagrined as it had been, like a lover without hope, was now given over to joy, and this happiness served better to cure him than all the remedies of surgery.

* * *

MATTHIEU DE MONTREUIL (1611 to 1691).⁽¹⁾

TO A PHYSICIAN WHO BECAME A PRIEST.

When I see you officiate at sermon and Mass,
Reading the Scriptures, hearing each sinner's
confession,

I thank Divine Bounty that led you to pass
To the Church from the medical profession.

Had Hippocrates' precepts received at your hand
The same close attention you give to Church
laws,

We'd not now be list'ning to services grand,
But been duly torn by your medical claws.

So, thanks be to God! at fasting and feast;
Ah! we'll praise His mercy whenever we can,
For it was His will changed doctor to priest—
Ah! God is, indeed, the Saviour of man.

excuses his sarcasms against medical art, although he put into his criticisms less animosity than Montaigne, Moliere and J. J. Rousseau, who did not suffer as much from these infirmities, however, as Scarron.

1 This was the case of Rabelais reversed; he had the double title of Cure de Meudon and Doctor of the Faculty of Montpellier.

BENSERADE (1613 to 1691).⁽¹⁾

SONNET TO THE MARQUIS DEL CARETTE.⁽²⁾

Toy, dont redoutent les approches
Ces medecins qui volontiers
Du monde retranchent le tiers,
Celebres par le bruit de cloches.

Toy, qui ne bronches, ni ne cloches,
Eloigne de leur faux sentiers,
Fleau des languissans heritiers,
Qui te font des secrets reproches.

Digne Esculape de nos jours,
Carette, ton noble secours
A le bien payer me convie.

Et fameux par tout l'Univers,
Celuy qui prend soin de ma vie
Doit estre immortel dans mes vers.

THE TWO DOCTORS AND THE PATIENT.

One of those physicians who make so many visits,
Always saying, "So much better!" to a fellow
sick abed,
So wearied out a patient by his oft-repeated lying
That he cried, "My heirs all think as you have
said!"

1 Benserade died of a hemorrhage following an unfortunate bleeding from the arm, where the humeral artery was wounded, and the physician in charge, losing his head, abandoned the patient and fled.

It was Benserade who was the author of an Italian-French ballet entitled "*Amor Malato*" (Love sick), in which physicians were ridiculed. This was in January, 1657. "Two doctors," says Louis Moland, "called Time and Hurry, consult at the bedside of Love who has Reason as a nurse. Hurry desires to administer a dose of antimonial wine, but the other two object, and decide that the best means to cure Love is to distract her by recreations and diversions. So Time and Reason appear to have been good physicians ever since in curing Love."

2 "Carette was an Italian who acquired great reputation by selling high-priced remedies that seldom killed if they did not cure," says La Bruyere.

Sick men should profit by this salutary story:
Can they cure you saying "Better!" in order
to seem nice?
Remember Moliere ne'er gave doctors any glory,
For he knew them far too well to follow their
advice.

TO A SHOEMAKER WHO BECAME A
DOCTOR.

An impudent shoemaker, stupidly ignorant,
wholly ill-bred,
Became a doctor, wealthy and envied. The
rich he did treat;
For people of high rank to this fellow trusted a
head,
When as a cobbler they'd never trust him with
their feet.

TO DOCTOR ESPRIT.

(Sonnet.)

Espirit, it is said thou canst health restore,
That disease departs at the glance of thine eye;
'Tis thine wonderful art makes the world adore,
That art that makes many a patient die.

Thou hast cured Ludre with thine medical aid;
Thou art proud of doing thine healing duty:
The color once from her cheeks did fade,
But now she is rosy, a perfect young beauty.

What is the reason thou hast made this cure?
'Twas not an accident, surely not chance?
Say, was she virtuous, or was she impure?
Doth she for three life's pleasures enhance?

Alas! we know well that her cure injures all,
For sparkling's her glance, heaving's her chest.
To save this one patient on whom thou dost call
Thou'd be guilty of cutting the throats of the
rest.

ÆSCULAPIUS AS A SERPENT.

(Rondeau.)

Like a serpent Æsculapius passed,
And the cautious their prudence forgot.
Among real charmers he may be classed;
To sport with men's lives was his lot.
His mortal days sped pleasantly by,
And he's now with the Gods, by their grace.
With Jove he's honored up in the sky,
And his image on earth has a place:

As a serpent!

He practiced the life-giving trade;
And Rome, by his sageness impressed,
Acknowledged all cures that he made
When mortals by pain were distressed.
Yet, when he to Olympus swift flew
Rome trusted no doctor besides;
And keeping his merits in view,
Now in Rome his bronze image abides.

As a serpent!

EPITAPH UPON A PHYSICIAN.

"Hac sub humo, per quem tot jacuere, jacet."

Here lies one who others destroyed,
A learned physician, old and gray,
His harmful art the public decoyed.
For him let us *Pater Nosters* say.

A true Basilisk he, with death in his eye;
To shorten life's days was his favorite trick,
For potioned and clystered his patients did die.
He once killed a mule, as it chanced to be
sick.

More of an enemy he of Quinquina
Than great Augustus was of his Cinna.

* * *

GILLES MENAGE (French critic,
1613 to 1692).

MENAGIANA.

I must be immortal, for the charlatans
and physicians have not yet been able to
kill me.(!) I have had thirteen doctors
from the Faculty in consultation at one
time. They agreed that I must not study
and should not write, saying if I violated
this order I would not last long. Since
then I no longer desire the attendance of
medical men, as I have studied harder
than ever and have written continually;
hence my improved condition of health.

I Menage suffered for a long time from sci-
atica. Being on his knees one day at the Church
of Notre Dame, he dislocated his thigh in at-
tempting to rise to his feet. On another occasion
he fell and dislocated his shoulder in a chapel.
So that he was in the habit of saying he was
always "out of place in a church."

Petrarch was the great enemy of doctors. Upon the words "*ars longa, vita brevis*," which commence the aphorisms of Hippocrates, he remarked that "*Vitam dum brevem dixerunt, brevissimam effecerunt.*" Godeau as well has noted this in his poems:

Cet art qui fait le meurtre avec impunité
Et dont notre foiblesse accroît l'autorité
Par ses remèdes m'empoisonne. . . .

Here are two verses in Latin on a famous accoucheur who enriched himself at the expense of pregnant women:

Quas bona pars hominum muliebri condit in
antro,
Ex illo Clemenr eruit unus opes.⁽¹⁾

It is thus that medicine is defined as the art where science sustains a patient with frivolous reasons as to the cause of his malady, and amuses him with good and bad remedies, while waiting for Nature to kill or cure him.

A peasant was very ill. Two surgeons wished to use a remedy on him, saying, "*Probemus* (Let us try)." The patient, thinking they mocked him, answered: "You take me for a *Bemus*,⁽²⁾ eh? I will not take your medicine!" And thus probably saved his own life, which might have been lost had he swallowed the agent.

Almost the same thing occurred to Muret. Two physicians, without knowing it, had a consultation, which he overheard, in a room adjoining his sleeping apartment. After having discoursed at length in Latin, not believing the patient

understood that tongue, the conversation finally dropped on to a new remedy, that had not yet been tried, and one physician said to the other: "*Paciamus periculum in anima vili* (Let us try it on a life of no value)." When Muret, rising in his bed, exclaimed in indignation: "*Vilem animam appellas, pro qua Christus non dignatus est mori* (Thou callest a life without value for which Christ disdained not to die)?"

Bernier de Blois, a physician, knew well how to speak, inasmuch as he continually talked. I know not how he dared present himself at my house, since he had printed a letter he had addressed to me in which he had roundly abused some of my ordinary visitors. I had asked him not to call, as he might meet some of the parties he had slandered and maltreated, as they would be indignant at me for permitting his presence; and besides, I could not have blamed them for reproaching him with bitterness when all the wrong was on his side. He had not even spared me in his abusive letter, and I could scarcely believe he would have the impudence to call. Then he wrote a book against my character. My friends asked how I would bear that insult, and I answered: "Bernier knows what wood to warm me with. In fact, when he visits me he always takes up the whole fireside, so that I cannot warm myself even if I chose. He has written, in the past two years, a thousand things I have said to him, in order to insert the same in his "*Essay on Medicine*"; and the material has been badly used, it is *vir levis armaturæ*."

One of the most curious works that has ever appeared is the "*Life of Cardinal Bessarion*," by Nicholas Perot, in which the latter speaks in a foot-note of the word *incompris* of the twenty-fifth epigram in the

1 All that wealth hidden by man in the bosom of woman, Clement removes piece by piece.

2 *Bemus* means *ignoramus*, in old French parlance, although the word is now obsolete. The play in words is obvious.

first book of Martial, where he says very positively that the disease of which the Cardinal died was caused by his physician: "*Morbo inopinato, Medici, quem secum habebat opera correptus, extinctus est.*"⁽¹⁾ That which I expressly observe is by reason for the opinion that his mission had a bad success, and the Cardinal really died of chagrin."

The Marquis de Liche was Ambassador from Spain to Rome in spite of himself, for the Duke of Modena retained him in position, because he appreciated the wit of the Marquis as well as his intrigues. During the whole period he was ambassador he did all he could to mortify Pope Innocent XI, thinking this was the best means to have himself recalled from his mission, but failed in the attempt. Having failed in this plan, he fell sick and sent for the Pope's physician. One of his friends knew that in Italy the native physicians are more to be feared than in any other country in all Christendom, and remarked to the Marquis: "Why do you send for the doctor of your bitter enemy, the Pope? Do you desire to shorten your life?" And the tired-out Marquis retorted: "Do you think I should send for the Pope's physician if I wanted to live?" His Holiness having heard this story, sent Favoriti to give his compliments to the Marquis in his sickness, who told him the Pope prayed for his convalescence with as much fervor as he did for his retirement from the mission.

In the majority of instances epidemic diseases only exist in the imagination and deceit of charlatan physicians and surgeons. The Abbot Bourdelot told me that Queen Anne of Austria died of a cancer of

the heart; all the ladies of the Court who visited her believed themselves attacked by the same disease,⁽¹⁾ and a quack doctor, for his own profit and reputation, treated every one of these deluded females, and with his remedies made an imaginary or veritable malady.

Marshall de Bassompierre died at Provence from an overdose of opium, given him by an unskilled doctor. This story accords well with that which others relate, that he died of apoplexy at the castle of the Duke de Vitri, on the 12th of October, 1646. *An overdose of opium perhaps causes apoplexy.*⁽²⁾

* * *

SORBIERE (1615 to 1670).

SORBERIANA.

Galen. He attributes many inconsiderate things to Galen; for, in treating the same things in different places, he never has the same definition, nor the same order, nor the same proofs. It seems as though he proposed to write a book of a certain number of pages—to make quantity without quality. He has taken pleasure in wielding his pen and give it wide space upon the text of Hippocrates, which has

¹ These instances of courtier imitation are common. The fainting spells of Louis XIII. became the fashion among his nobles and Court attendants. When Louis XIV. was operated on for fistula in ano, many of the courtiers said they had that stylish disease and insisted on being operated on, following the King's example. During the pregnancy of Marie Antoinette all the ladies of her Court claimed to be *enceinte* and simulated that condition by padding themselves over the abdomen, so that all seemed to be in more or less advanced periods of gestation.

² This fantastic explanation may satisfy Menages' malice against doctors, but it is not scientific, however.

¹ He died suddenly, lost by the physician who had him in charge.

served to support him in his efforts to climb and push upwards, in such a way that the author reminds us of the ivy crawling up a tree or over a wall to which it is wholly attached for support and sustenance.

Physicians. The doctors are, in their knowledge of physic, like blind beggars, and the people are like Provincials who know not the streets of Paris. The blind beggars can lead you through the public thoroughfares and from lazy habit and experience find the churches, which they do without seeing or knowing how they arrived thereat. Physicians do the same thing with the human body, which they reach they know not by what route, yet often leads them, happily, to where they wish to reach, but yet to places they know not by sight.⁽¹⁾

It is a pitiable thing to hear doctors rely on bad reasoning as to the remedies they so often use with more good effects than science.

Medicine. There is no knowledge more necessary to our welfare than that of medicine, yet no art is more *obscure* and from all time more *neglected*.

* * *

CHEVREAU (1615 to 1741).

CHEVRÆANA.

In China there are doctors and apothecaries, and they prepare the remedies ordered. They are paid only when the patients are *cured*, and receive nothing

I A physician heard a nobleman speak of medicine as a conjectural art, and remarked to him: "Let us suppose that Paris was suddenly beclouded by a heavy fog. Is it not true that you would prefer a blind man with his staff as a guide, one who is accustomed to the streets and

otherwise. If this custom were regularly observed in Paris there would be none left in the hospitals—except the doctors.

REGARDING MEDICINE.

Medicine is a very difficult science, because the theory puzzles the understanding and the practice enlarges the imagination. One is never cured by aphorisms, and experience goes further than accepted rules. If we examine the nourishment and temperament, climate, waters of the places, and even perhaps the constellations of the day, we never follow just measures. When we fail we find the remedy that has been good to some one at a given time is injurious to another at a different period, because it no longer has the same action. It may be even less good sometimes to two persons having different constitutions; for we know, from the Greek historians, that Antonius Musa killed Marcellus with the same remedy through means of which he cured the Emperor Augustus. In these Provinces the *executioners of the Faculty of Montpellier* are not much in fashion, as they have only one method on travel on the same road. All that I know is that *Æsculapius*, according to Celsus, reduced the duty of the doctor to cure *tuto, celeriter et jucunde*;⁽¹⁾ but where can you find a modern *Æsculapius*? When we shall meet a prudent and skillful physician, who cares more for experience than all the maxims of the Schools; who only consults his own conscience, without reflecting on his personal interests; who has only seen his patients cured, without regard to his rank or standing professionally, we will exclaim with Juvenal:

nevergoes astray, to a clairvoyant who would assuredly lead you into the ditch?"

I Surely, quickly and agreeably.

Rara avis in terris nigroque simillima
cycno. (1)

Yet, another thing, this science is very hazardous, inasmuch as it is founded on conjectures; and, according to Plato, the conjectures of physicians are extremely uncertain. For the rest, our doctors need not feel astonished that I have treated them as I would public executioners; the same Celsus I have quoted treated *Æsculapius* no more favorably. "*Quo magis fallunter, quiper omnia, jucundam ejus disciplinam esse concipiunt. Et enim ulterioribus quidem diebus cubantis etiam luxurie suscripsit primis vero tortoris vicem exhibuit.*" (2)

* * *

HAUTEROCHE (French dramatist,
1617 to 1707).

CRISPIN, MEDECIN.

ACT II.—Scene 2.

Mirobolan: We must now arrange the room properly, so as to receive all those who do me the honor of attending my dissections. Aside from this, we must be careful, although the garden separating the two houses is a guarantee against the obstinate disputations and loud noises held on these occasions. There are always some who will not agree with the others, and who, in order to sustain an erroneous opinion, make more discord than four ordinary men.

Dorine: Truly, sir, although you claim to be doctors, you never agree; your sci-

ence is an uncertain one, and you are the first deceived.

Mirobolan: That sometimes happens; but that is not the fault of the medicine.

Dorine: It must, then, be the fault of the doctors when it is not that of the medicine.

Mirobolan: That may be the case, too; but, *Dorine*, that is none of your business.

Dorine: No; but I have the right to express my sentiments, and although it may be none of my business to-day, it will be some other day, in spite of myself.

Scene 10.

Crispin (passing in a doctor's gown): Zounds! Look how I'm arrayed. [*To Dorine*] Ah! I shall appear to be ignorant, but that makes no difference, since so many doctors are ignorant.

Dorine: Without doubt.

Scene 11.

Crispin: Now, I am all right. Open the door!

Lisa [entering]: Is the doctor in?

Dorine: No!

Lisa: Why do you conceal him?

Dorine: What do you desire?

Lisa: Only to say two words to him.

Crispin: Well! What do you desire of me?

Lisa: Sir, I wish to tell you that my mistress has lost her little pet dog, that she loves most dearly, and she blames me, saying it was my fault. Now, I have been told that you are acquainted with the art of divination as well as with that of medicine.

Crispin: I'm truly as learned in the one art as in the other.

Lisa: Understanding that has led me to come and ask your advice; and I am willing to reward you handsomely.

1 A rare bird on earth, only comparable to a black swan.

2 So it is an error to imagine that all his methods are agreeable; in his latter days he favored inactivity in the treatment of disease, but in his early days of practice he was a true executioner.

Crispin: How long has the dog been lost?

Lisa: Two days.

Crispin: At what hour was the animal missing?

Lisa: At eleven o'clock in the morning.

Crispin: What color was its hair?

Lisa: Black and white; and it had a turned-up tail.

Crispin [*in deep thought*]: That is enough.

Lisa [*to Dorine*]: Ah! the good doctor! He will now give us some good news about our dear little dog.

Dorine: Without doubt.

Crispin: Listen. It is two days since he was lost?

Lisa: Yes, doctor.

Crispin: At eleven o'clock in the morning.

Lisa: Yes.

Crispin: He was black and white, with a turned-up tail?

Lisa: Yes, doctor.

Crispin [*after deep thought*]: You will have to take pills.

Lisa: Pills!

Crispin: Yes.

Lisa: But taking pills will not make me find the dog?

Crispin: Yes.

Lisa: But what kind of pills?

Crispin: The first the apothecary hands you.

Lisa: But, doctor—

Crispin: It is not necessary to discuss the matter. Do what I tell you to do.

Lisa: How many pills must I take?

Crispin: Three.

Lisa [*giving him a crown piece*]: Very well. If I find that little dog by this means I shall give you any amount of practice.

Crispin: If you do not find the dog it will not be the fault of the remedy.

Lisa: I believe you. Adieu, doctor.

[*Crispin*: Adieu. [*Lisa leaves the room.*]

Scene 12.

Dorine [*after having closed the door*]: Ah, *Crispin*, you no sooner put on a doctor's gown than you receive your first fee.

Crispin: The d—l. I see that this is a first-class trade. Without knowing what you are doing you earn money.

* * *

ROGER DE RABUTIN (1618 to 1693).

MEMOIRS.

Fifteen days after my return to Les-borges I was attacked by a quartan fever, caused by figs, melons, and from using snow and ice waters,—too much eating and the excessive heat.

The Prince's physician, called Montreuil, treated me, and bled me eight times in three weeks. Fortunately for me, the doctor fell sick himself, and died. Except for this, judging from his practice, he would have killed me.

* * *

TALLEMANT DES REAUX (1619 to 1692).

HISTORETTES XXVI. MALHERBE.

Once, being ill, he sent for Thevenin the oculist, and the latter proposed to call in Dr. Robin.⁽¹⁾ Said Malherbe: "I do not desire that kind of a man." Then said Thevenin: "Permit me to summon Doctor Guenebeau?" "No!" cried Malherbe, "that is the name of a hunting

¹ Robin signifies in French a contemptible fellow.

dog." "Shall we call in Doctor Dacier (steel)?" queried the oculist. "No," responded Malherbe, "he is harder than iron." "Then," said Thevenin, "we must call in Doctor Providence." And Malherbe replied: "In Providence only will I trust."

XXXVIII. DURET.

Doctor Duret was a visionary physician. He claimed that the air of Paris was unhealthy, and raised his only son in a glass house to keep him from dying. At dinner he took nothing but meat juices, saying that his carriage jolting prevented proper digestion; but he always took a very heavy supper. He had a horror of a fire in a grate, and never would look at a hearth-place. He knew his art well, and grew rich at practice. All apothecaries denounced him as a fool because he cured his patients by dieting them, fasting being his sovereign remedy. His favorite prescription was pure water and a roasted apple.

LXV. CARDINAL RICHELIEU.

Madam de Guercheville, when at Angouleme, needed a physician, and selected Vaultier, who was much praised as a skilful practitioner. He cured her of erysipelas, and restored her to health from other maladies of which she complained, so that he had greater influence over her than any other person; from hence came the hatred Cardinal Richelieu bore him. Vaultier was a large, broad shouldered man, who never failed to make himself heard on all occasions. He was very rich and penurious, his income from rents alone amounting to 20,000 crowns per annum.

CXLI. DU MOUSTIER.

He hated the doctors as much as he did

the Jesuits, and called them the "magnificent executioners of Nature."

CLXX. DE LORME.⁽¹⁾

He told how he had beaten a physician of the Faculty with his walking-stick. Madame de Themines had a very sick son, and De Lorme asked for a consultation. Doctor Duret and another physician were accordingly summoned. On entering the sick room, Duret, being the eldest, went first; the other doctor, as being from the Faculty of Medicine of Paris, claimed second place and followed, when De Lorme seized a stick and thrashed the latter soundly, whereat Duret fled in terror, followed by the irate De Lorme. The Marquise screamed: "Ah! Doctor Duret, you are running off without prescribing for my son;" to which the fast-disappearing Duret shouted back: "Have him bled, Madam!" and could never be persuaded to return.

He pretended that the people of Bourbon erected a statue in his honor, as he advertised their waters and afterwards sold his charge. He took a large pension from these people to make the world believe he was doing well by living in magnificence. In time, however, he grew to be immensely rich. When he became old he acquired a great fear of damp evenings, and always, at five o'clock, he covered his head with a dew-proof cap, and, attired in a flowered satin suit and rose-colored silk stockings, he appeared on the prome-

¹ Charles de Lorme, first physician to Henry IV, and of Louis XII, died at the age of eighty years. He invented a red soup that he claimed was a panacea for all earthly ills. He took great precautions to guard himself from cold and moisture. He sat in a chair before a fire-place during the whole winter. He slept on a bed of warm bricks, lying down to his rest wearing six pairs of stockings and his boots.

nade, making one of the most pleasant, and at the same time unique, figures in the fashionable world.

CLXXI. JALOUX.

A physician of Soissons, named Rapoil, had a good-looking wife, but she had an eruption on her face that cropped out each month, so that she had only fifteen days of beauty out of every thirty. Her husband was very jealous of her, and, although well knowing how to cure her, owing to his suspicious nature he would not give her a remedy. She was too coquettish, nevertheless, and soon obtained a divorce from him.

CCIV. M. DE VASSE.

Vasse was in love with the famous Ninon, the celebrated beauty, and invited her to a party at Saint Cloud. He asked Mesnardiere to be one of the party. This man was the family physician of the Marquise de Sable and a professional author; and, although Vasse rode on horseback, attended by four pages in livery, the doctor climbed up on the carriage seat and exchanged amorous whispers with the beautiful Ninon. Scarron said of this Doctor Mesnardiere, that when he wore firey red stockings he thought he set the female world in flames. Yet this medical upstart was only the son of an apothecary, and he was named *Jules*, too, after Julius Cæsar. It was a good name for him, as he seemed to be a *conqueror*—of women's hearts; perhaps he was really an honor to *Julius Cæsar*.

CCXXXII. M. DE GUISE.

It was reported to him that a doctor residing in the house had made some mocking verses on the *amours* of M. de Guise and Mademoiselle de Pons. All against this girl was a *liaison* with His

Majesty the King; this portion of the rhyme was true; but De Guise made his servants visit this scandalizing doctor's room, and while he remained at the door the lackeys cow-hided the doctor. This was a cowardly proceeding, methinks.

CCXCIV. M. DE CHAMP ROND.

Finally, he fell sick in the summer of 1658. On the seventeenth day of his illness he sent for his wife and said: "Madam, this Doctor Brayer makes my illness last longer than is necessary—this is ruination to my business affairs; so discharge him at once, for Nature will cure me without his assistance."

CCXCVII. BON MOTS.

Claquenelle, a noted apothecary, had Massac, a great partisan politician, say to him: "*Organa pharmacie, sunt organa fallacie*" (a pharmaceutical party is a party of thieves), to which the druggist answered, not thinking his charges high: "*Organa publicanorum, sunt organa diabolorum*" (the party of publicans is the party of the Devil).

CCCIV. MADAM DE HEQUETOT.

Charleval, brother-in-law of La Ferte, wished to purge himself, as Lent was approaching. The remedy he took from a charlatan, *i.e.*, Merlet, physician to the Faculty, gave him a frightful diarrhœa. This same quack then insisted that he take another remedy, and the boy, having faith, did so; it was an astringent, and caused such a retention of urine that the poor young fellow died twenty-four hours later.

CCXXXVI. EXTRAVAGANCES.

Catherine de Gonzague de Cleves, Duchesse of Longueville, wished, in order to follow the fashion, to be bled. One day

a surgeon bled her before she was able to turn her head away from her arms, when she promptly discharged the medical man, remarking: "*He is very impudent: he bled me in my own presence!*"

CCCLV. BON MOTS.

Montaigne was sick one day, and his friends insisted that he call in a physician. He asked this doctor what his name was, and he responded: "Scholars and learned men call me Egidius, but the ignorant call me a gilly;" whereat Montaigne chased him out of the room, and would not permit the ass to enter again.

CCCLIX. MADAME DE LAUNAY.

During one of her illnesses Doctor Guenault was obliged to percuss her belly, and she said to him chidingly: "Not so low, Guenault! Don't touch me so low down!" He was a mad wag, this Doctor Guenault, and imagined that it might be to her taste.

CCCLXXII. PELLOT.

He fell into a profound state of melancholy, which made him really hate life. He sent in quest of a physician, and seriously demanded of him what kind of death was the easiest; that he intended to snuff out life's candle, and had thought of cutting his throat with a razor. "Don't do it!" cried the doctor; "those who cut their throats are usually saved, and suffer greatly afterwards." "Then," said he, "I can throw myself from the window to the pavement beneath. It is three stories of a fall." The physician answered: "That might only cripple you; but I will give you a surer death. I will purge you several times, for it is easy to feign that you are sick; then, under pretext that you suffer from insomnia, I will prescribe an over-

dose of opium and you will die amid happy dreams." The intention of this good doctor was to purge the patient of his melancholy humor, and afterwards give him mental repose through sleep. He did as he said he would. He went to call on him shortly afterwards, and the servants said, "He is asleep." He returned again after the lapse of some time and remarked, "He still sleeps. Praise be to God!" On the third visit, thinking the patient had slept long enough, the doctor strove to arouse him, but all in vain. The doctor, without intending to keep his word, had really told his patient the truth.

* * *

CYRANO DE BERGERAC (1620 to 1650).

AGAINST PHYSICIANS.

Since I am condemned, for physicians condemn one to die as well as the Judges of Courts, you will understand that I have the same right as a criminal who speaks his last words on the scaffold. So I, in the hands of a medical executioner, enter my protest against being starved to death by a low diet. The fever and the druggier hold a poignard at my throat, yet I trust they will not permit my discourse to weary you. I know full well that the medical art condemns all the sick to death, and the few who escape attribute their cure to the powerful remedies taken; and those who are dying claim that they have employed the most able doctors. Admire the effrontery of my executioner, since I feel that my dying is caused by his medicines; and the more new symptoms that appear the more he rejoices, since he can apply new drugs. When I fell into a profound syncope that lasted more than an hour, and related the same to him in alarm, he re-

sponded that it was *a good sign*. When he saw a bloody flux slowly destroying me, he said it was *worth twice an ordinary bleeding*. When I felt dispirited and felt a coldness in all my limbs, he only laughed and said his medicine had put out the fires of my fever. When near unto death and unable to speak, I heard him cry to my weeping family, "Fools, do you not know it is the fever?" Meantime, I am forced to bear with him and slowly die. I know that I am wrong in calling in my enemy to assist me, but could I divine that those who make a profession of curing would kill me?

Ah! these doctors. No wonder that the police authorities oblige these medical graduates to ride on mules instead of horses, for fear the race of doctors might increase so that there would be more executioners than patients. Oh! what contentment. I should love well to anatomize their mules, those poor animals that never feel the spurs, neither within nor on the surface of the flesh, because the spurs and boots are superfluities that the delicate spirits of the Faculty cannot digest. These medical men regulate the diet of their mules more strictly than even that of their patients; they feed the poor animals so little that their skin only hangs to the bone. They treat us no better, although we pay them well.

Behold! See the resemblance between the trial by a doctor and by a judge. The doctor, having looked at the urine and questioned the patient as to his stools, condemns him; the surgeon binds him down, and the apothecary discharges his blunderbuss syringe into the patient's rectum. The trial and execution are finished.

Three kinds of inflictions are sent to punish man during his life: The lawyer

torments his purse; the doctor worries the body; while the clergyman bedevils his soul.

* * *

LA FONTAINE (1621 to 1692).

THE SICK DEER.

Il ne trouva plus rien a frire;
D'un mal il tomba dans un pire,
Et si vit reduit a la fin
A jeuner et mourir de faim.

Il en coute a qui vous reclame.
Medecins du corps et de l'ame!
O temps, O moeurs! J'ai beau crier
Tout le monde se fait payer.

LE QUINQUINA.

Thus speaks the school and all its disciples;
Forced by their patients to heed the doctrine
That kindly Dame Nature, or that their medicine
Sometimes apart or yet sometimes united,
No matter which, have their action on all.
They should not kill fever but to Nature leave
it—

To a good temperament.

Yet senna and bleeding,

Those, so they say, all impure matter purge,
And should not be disdained by suffering mortals.
The former, mild purgative, certain and sure,
Is the best remedy for a soft temperament,
Helped along gently by a generous diet;
Soon the poor patient has health as usual;
Yet with this method cures are made slowly.
Here then's a cure more prompt and most mar-
velous—

A remedy so far missed by our Faculties. (*)

* * *

MOLIERE (Dramatist, 1622 to 1673).

EXTRACTS FROM DON JUAN, OR THE FEAST WITH THE STATUE.

ACT III. *Scene 1.*

Sganarelle: Yes, 'tis the robe of an old doctor, who left it in pawn; and it cost

1 This poem by La Fontaine may be found in the "Medecine Litteraire et Anecdote" of

me money to redeem it, too. But do you know, sir, that this habit has already made me respected. I am consulted by all the gentlemen I meet; yes, people come to consult me—all on account of my costume.

Don Juan: How's that?

Sganarelle: Five or six countrymen and women, seeing me pass, asked my advice on different maladies.

Don Juan: Of course you answered that you did not know their diseases?

Sganarelle: I? Not at all. I wished to sustain the honor of the profession's garb. I reasoned in regard to their various affections, and prescribed for each one of them.

Don Juan: What remedies did you give them?

Sganarelle: My dear sir, I prescribed the first thing I thought of; I picked my remedies at random, and it would be very amusing should I chance to cure them and they should come to thank me for my skill.

Don Juan: Why not? Why should you not have the same rights as others who profess medical knowledge? Doctors can cure no better than you; and their art is pure humbug. Glory comes to them with each happy success, and you can profit, like they do, with each patient's good fortune; besides, they will give your remedies credit for what is done by chance and the forces of Nature.

Sganarelle: Sir, methinks you are a sceptic in regard to medicine.

Don Juan: 'Tis one of the great errors of mankind.

Sganarelle: Have you, then, no belief in senna, cassia or antimonial wine?

Witkowski. The above is a very incomplete and unsatisfactory rendering, and is only included as an extract.

Don Juan: Why should I believe in them? (1)

Sganarelle: You are too sceptical. Yet, you see that for some time past antimonial wine has made a noise in the medical world; the miracles wrought by this remedy have converted the most incredulous

1 Antimonial wine lighted up the flames of professional war among the doctors of that epoch. Guy Patin played upon the different names of this medicine, and it was sometimes called *heretique*, on account of the schisms its use produced among physicians. It was likewise designated *stibial*, or *stygiat*, a purveyor for the Styx. Many violent epigrams were directed against this dangerous remedy; one of the most brilliant of these was that made in answer to the "*Antimony Triumphant*" of Eusebius Renaudot, *i.e.*:

De l'antimoine il faut chanter la gloire!
Il peut monter, das un char de victoire
Au Capitole avec des chevaux blancs.
Applaudissez, histrions, charlatans;
Et d'une drogue enflez encore vos lis'es!
Heros, jamais, eut-il plus de lauriers,
S'il ne s'agit pour gagner une page
Dans les recits qui passent d'age en age,
Que de tuer les hommes par milliers.

This inscription recalls the Latin one, "*Liberator patriæ*," addressed to the physicians who attended Pope Leo X. in his last illness. In the same manner the physician Curtius was regarded as having caused the death of Pope Clement VIII. by his powerful remedies, and was described as one well worthy of recompense for the valuable public service thus rendered.

Curtius occidit Clementem, Curtius auro
Donandus, per quem publica parta salus.

Or, rendered into English, "Curtius has killed Clement; a reward should be given to Curtius, for he has saved the State."

The cure of Louis XIV, and the death of his Minister, are attributed, rightfully or wrongfully, to this same medicine, and led it to be said that antimonial wine had saved France on two occasions.

Notwithstanding the success obtained by Valot, that ardent partisan of tartar emetic, he was the butt of the most biting sarcasm. Guy

persons. It is not more than three weeks since that I witnessed its marvellous effects.

Don Juan : Where and how ?

Sganarelle : There was a man who for six days was in mortal agony. They knew not what further remedies to prescribe in the case, as all prescriptions failed ; so they finished the treatment by giving an emetic.

Don Juan : He recovered ?

Sganarelle : No, he died.

Don Juan : The effect of the remedy is admirable !

Sganarelle : How ! He had been sick for days trying to die, and antimonial wine relieved him promptly. Certainly, no medicine, in such a case, could be more efficacious. (1)

EXTRACTS FROM "LOVE IS THE BEST DOCTOR." (2)

ACT II.—*Scene 1.*

Lizette : What will you do, sir, with four doctors ? Is not one sufficient to kill a person ?

Patin has given him the nickname of *Gargan—tua*, because he accuses him of killing, with his much-vaunted panacea, one of the Ministers of Finance, *Gargan*. This malicious Guy Patin produces, in his "Letters," an epigram against Valot on the occasion of the death of Henrietta, Queen of England, *i.e.* :

Henri d'un coup de baionnette
Charles finit sur un billot ;
Et maintenant meurt Henriette
Par l' ignorance de Valot.

1 This piece has been put in French verses by the celebrated Corneille, in 1673.

2 The four doctors satirized by Moliere in this piece were the principal Court physicians, *i.e.*, De Fougereais, Esprit, Guenaut, and Dacquain. All four of these men were the butt of sarcasms on all hands. One day Guenaut was blocked in his carriage, and a coachman, recognizing him,

Sganarelle : Hold your tongue, Miss ! Four counsellors are better than one.

Lizette : Cannot your daughter die more easily without the assistance of these gentlemen ?

Sganarelle : Do you think doctors kill people ?

Lizette : Without doubt. I know a man who proved this—by incontestible reasons, too ; he maintained that one should never say this person died from a fever or from a fluxion of the lungs, but from four doctors and two apothecaries. (1)

Sganarelle : Tut ! Do not offend these gentlemen.

Lizette : Goodness ! Sir, our cat recovered from a leap it made from the house-top to the street below, and it neither ate nor moved a foot for the space of three days. It is fortunate there are no cat doctors, for pussy would have been finished up with purgatives and bleedings.

Sganarelle : Shut your mouth, I say. What impertinence ! But here they are.

Lizette : Look out, now, and you will be edified. They will tell you *your daughter is sick*—in Latin, too.

Scene 2.

Sganarelle : Well, gentlemen ?

Dr. Tomes : We have examined the patient sufficiently, and find much that is impure in her.

exclaimed, "Let this doctor pass through, it is he who did the people a kindness by killing the Cardinal !" Louis XIV himself secretly enjoyed and encouraged Moliere to lampoon his physicians, wholly in a spirit of mischief, however. Yet we know the King once remarked, "Physicians often make us weep ; sometimes, however, they make us laugh."

1 Imitation of the epitaph on the Emperor Adrian : *Turba medicorum perii* — I died of too many physicians.

Sganarelle: My daughter impure, sir!

Dr. Tomes: I desire to say there is much impurity and corruption in her body.

Sganarelle: Ah! I understand more clearly.

Dr. Tomes: But we are now going to consult together.

Sganarelle: Lizette, give the gentlemen chairs.

Lizette (to Dr. Tomes): Ah, sir, are you with them?

Sganarelle (to Lizette): Do you know this gentleman?

Lizette: I saw him at your niece's house only the other day.

Dr. Tomes: How is her coachman?

Lizette: Better off, indeed. He is dead.

Dr. Tomes: Dead?

Lizette: Yes, dead.

Dr. Tomes: That cannot be possible.

Lizette: I know not whether it be possible or not, but I know full well that he is dead.

Dr. Tomes: He cannot be dead, no matter what you say.

Lizette: I tell you he is dead and buried.

Dr. Tomes: You deceive yourself, Miss.

Lizette: I saw him die.

Dr. Tomes: That is impossible, for Hippocrates says that that kind of diseases only terminate at the end of the fourteenth day, or at the twenty-fifth day at furthest; the coachman only fell ill six days since.

Lizette: Hippocrates may say what he pleases, but I tell you that coachman is dead.

Sganarelle: Peace, you chatterer. Let us leave these men to their consultation. Gentlemen, I beg you to consult very carefully in my daughter's case.

Scene 4. (1)

Sganarelle: Gentlemen, my daughter's oppression increases. I beg you to tell me quickly what course of treatment you have decided on. Speak, gentlemen, I beseech you one after the other. Let me have your opinions.

Dr. Tomes: Sir, we have consulted regarding your daughter, and my notion is that her illness proceeds from too great heat of the blood; hence, conclude that bleeding is the proper remedy.

Dr. Desfonandres: I hold that her malady is due to a corruption of the humors, caused by over-repletion, and hence would advise an emetic.

Dr. Tomes: But I insist that an emetic would kill her!

Dr. Desfonandres: And your bleeding would likewise cause her death!

Dr. Tomes: And you are considered a learned man!

Dr. Desfonandres: Yes, and much more learned than you are. I could loan you brains in all matters of medical erudition.

Dr. Tomes: You remember that man you slew the other day?

Dr. Desfonandres: I suppose you too can recall the woman you sent to the other world but three days since?

Dr. Tomes [to Sganarelle]: Sir, I have expressed my opinion.

Dr. Desfonandres: I have expressed my thoughts likewise.

Dr. Tomes: If your daughter is not bled immediately she will die.

Dr. Desfonandres: If you have her bled she will not live a quarter of an hour.

Sganarelle [aside]: Which one of these

1 This scene is the exact counterpart of the famous consultation that occurred at Vincennes between Guenaut and Valot.

two men shall I believe, and what can I do under such opposite and decided opinions? [*To the physicians.*] Gentlemen, I implore you to settle my mind on this difficult subject, and tell me what you think the proper treatment for my daughter?

Dr. Macrotin: Sir, in such matters it is absolutely necessary to proceed with circumspection, lest we make mistakes, and, according to our master mind, Hippocrates, thereby engender dangerous consequences to the patient.

Dr. Bahis [*hastily*]: It is true; it is needful to be careful in all that's done. This is no child's play; and when errors are committed it is not easy to repair the injury done. *Experimentum periculosum*. This is why it is well to reason first so that we may duly consider matters, such as temperament, *et cetera*, and examine into the causes of the affection before applying remedies.

Sganarelle: One of these two last speakers is a turtle; the other is a race horse.

Dr. Macrotin: Yes, sir, to come down to facts, your daughter has a chronic malady, to which she will yield unless given relief. The symptoms all indicate a fuliginous and mordicant vapor that inflames the membranes of her brain. Now, this vaporous exhalation is termed in Greek *at mos*, and is undoubtedly caused by putrid humors, which are tenacious and conglutinous, and have their origin in the lower belly.

Dr. Bahis: And as these humors have been engendered by a long fermentation of time, they become hardened and acquire a malignity which causes them to float upward to the brain.

Dr. Macrotin: It is necessary, then, to draw, detach, pull out, expel, and evacuate the aforesaid humors, so that a strong purgative is required. Previous to this,

however, I find by experience that it is well to use anodyne remedies; that is to say, small emollient and detersive injections, cooling syrups mixed in tisane.

Dr. Bahis: After this we may come to emetics and bleeding—they seem to be required.

Dr. Macrotin: 'Tis true that your daughter may die, but you will at least have the consolation of knowing that she expired according to medical rules.

Dr. Bahis: It is always better to die according to rule than contrary to medical ordinances.

Dr. Macrotin: I sincerely say that is my opinion, Sir.

Dr. Bahis: I have spoken to you as plainly as I would to my own brother.

Sganarelle [*with emotion*]: Gentlemen, I sincerely thank you for the pains you have taken to consult properly. [*Aside.*] I am more uncertain than ever. 'The D—! but an idea possesses me. I will make her take Orvietan; it is a quack remedy, but Orvietan is an agent that many men have used with benefit.

EXTRACTS FROM "A DOCTOR IN SPIE
OF HIMSELF."

ACT III. *Scene i.*

Sganarelle [*rising hurriedly*]: You do not understand Latin?

Geronte: No.

Sganarelle [*finding himself dealing with one ignorant of the tongue*]: *Cabricias avis thuram, catalamus, singulariter, nominativo, hæc musa, bonus, bona bonum. Deus Sanctus, estne oratio Latinas?*

Geronte [*overpowered by the display of erudition*]: Ah! I never studied it.

Jacqueline: Ah! he is a skilful man.

Lucas: Yes; his words are beautiful and to my taste.

Sganarelle: Now these vapors, of which I have spoken, pass from the left side where the liver lies to the right side where the heart is always found. It is found in the lung, which we call in Latin *armyan*, and communicates with the brain, which we call in the Greek *nasmus*, by means of the *vena cava*, which is called in Hebrew *cubile*. These vapors fill the ventricle of the scapula, and you may from thence perceive they are very malignant. Listen, now, carefully.

Geronte: We will indeed!

Sganarelle: They have a certain malignity which is caused— Be attentive now, if you please.

Geronte: We are all attention!

Sganarelle: Which is caused by the accretion of humors engendered in the concavity of the diaphragm, hence these vapors. *Ossandus nequeis*, *patarinum*, *quipsa milus*. Now I have told you the reason your daughter is dumb.

Jacqueline: Ah! that is beautifully and clearly told.

EXTRACTS FROM MONSIEUR POUR-
CEAUGNAC.

ACT I. *Scene 8.*

Peasant [to *Doctor*]: Sir, he can stand no more; he says he feels the greatest pain in the world in his head.

Doctor: The patient is a fool, for in the disease from which he suffers he can have no pain in his head, according to Galen, but it is his spleen that troubles him.

Peasant: Be that as it may, he has run off from the belly for six months.

Doctor: Good! That is a sign that what is within is coming out. I will go and visit him in two or three days; but if he dies before that time do not forget to

inform me, for it is not good manners to have a physician visit the dead.

Patient's Daughter [to *Doctor*]: My father, sir, has always been more or less delicate.

Doctor: That's not my fault. I have given him all manner of remedies, why is he not well? How many times has he been bled lately?

The Daughter: Fifteen times, sir, in twenty days.

Doctor: What, bled fifteen times?

The Daughter: Yes, sir.

Doctor: And not yet cured?

The Daughter: No, sir.

Doctor: That's a sure sign the disease is not in his blood. We must purge him fifteen times to see whether it be in the humors.

EXTRACTS FROM LE MALADE
IMAGINAIRE.

Scene 9.

Argan: I pray you to tell me, sir, how I am.

Diafoirus [feeling his pulse]: Ah! Thomas, take his other arm. Let us see what our united judgment is on his pulse. *Quid dicis?*

Thomas Diafoirus: *Dico* that the pulse of this gentleman is the pulse of a man who is not well. It is a hard old pulse.

Diafoirus: That's true, my dear.

Thomas Diafoirus: Elastic.

Diafoirus: *Bene*.

Thomas Diafoirus: And a little capricious.

Diafoirus: *Optime*.

Thomas Diafoirus: This indicates a disorder of the parenchyma of the spleen.

Diafoirus: Good for you!

Argan: No. Doctor Purgon says that it is my liver that is affected.

Diafoirus: Yes, that's what *parenchyme* means, either the one or the other, either the liver or the spleen, by reason of the close sympathy, *va breve*, and often of the *meatus cholodochus* and *pylorus*. He ordered you, doubtless, to eat roast meat.

Argan: He ordered me to take no food that was not boiled.

Diafoirus: Of course. Roasted and boiled are the same thing.

Argan: Doctor, how many grains of salt shall I put to each boiled egg?

Diafoirus: Six, eight, ten, or more, in even numbers, however, as in medicine we go by even numbers.

Argan: Thanks, Doctor. Call again.

Scene 14.

Toinette [in garb of a physician]: Who is your doctor?

Argan: Doctor Purgon.

Toinette: I do not find his name among the list of more celebrated physicians. What did he say ailed you?

Argan: He said it was my liver; other physicians called in tell me it is my spleen.

Toinette: They are all ignoramuses: it is your lung that is affected.

Argan: My lungs?

Toinette: Yes, your lungs. How do you feel?

Argan: I have pain in the head from time to time.

Toinette: Of course; that's from your lungs.

Argan: I have pain in my heart sometimes.

Toinette: Yes. That's from your lungs.

Argan: I have numbness in my limbs sometimes.

Toinette: Most assuredly. That's from your lungs.

Argan: At some hours I have belly-ache.

Toinette: Certainly! That's your lungs. Do you not have an appetite?

Argan: Yes.

Toinette: There it is again—all caused by your lungs. Do you drink a little wine now and then?

Argan: Yes, Doctor.

Toinette: The lungs to blame again. I suppose you sleep a little after each meal, and feel all the better for the slumber?

Argan: Yes, Doctor.

Toinette: The lungs, the lungs. You could not do thus without lungs. What has your physician ordered you as a diet?

Argan: He ordered me to take soup.

Toinette: He is an ass!

Argan: Poultry.

Toinette: He is a fool!

Argan: He said to eat veal.

Toinette: He is a scoundrel!

Argan: He told me to take fresh eggs.

Toinette: He is a perfect ignoramus.

Argan: At night, he recommended me to eat stewed prunes to keep my bowels open.

Toinette: Ah, the rascal!

Argan: Also, to take my wine well diluted.

Toinette: *Ignorantus, ignoranta, ignorantum*. Take your wine strong and pure. It will thicken your blood, which is weak. Eat good fat beef, hog meat, old cheese from Holland. Your physician is a knavish beast. Come into my hands for treatment.

Argan: I should feel under obligations, Doctor, if you will but take my case in charge.

EXTRACTS FROM "THE FLYING DOCTOR."

Scene 4.

Gorgibus [father of *Lucille*]: I am your most obedient, Doctor. I was sent to re-

quest you to visit my daughter, who is ill. I put every hope in you, sir.

Sganarelle : Hippocrates says, and Galen for the same reason concludes, that no one feels well when he is sick. You are right to place your hope in me, for I am the ablest, greatest, and most skilful physician there is in the vegetable, mineral, or animal Faculty.

Gorgibus : I am charmed with you, sir.

Sganarelle : Do not deem me an ordinary physician, sir; a common practitioner I am not. All other doctors are, to my mind, only medical abortions. I have my own particular talents. I have secret remedies. *Per omnia sæcula sæculorum.*

Sabina (cousin to Lucille) : But, sir, it is not this man who is sick; it is his daughter.

Sganarelle : That makes no difference. The blood of father and daughter is the same thing, and by the alteration of that of the father I shall know that of the child. Mr. Gorgibus, can I examine her urine?

Gorgibus (to Sabina) : Go quickly and fetch some of my fair daughter's urine. Ah! Doctor, I fear she will die.

Sganarelle : I will take good medical care of her, sir; but she might die without a physician prescribed—[*Sabina returns*] Ah! here it is. Really, this urine, from its appearance, denotes inflammation of the intestines, and she must be really ill.

Gorgibus (indignant) : What, Doctor! Do you taste it?

Sganarelle : Be not astonished at that; ordinary physicians are content to look at the virgin fluid, but I am a true doctor, one outside the common horde. I swallow some of this amber liquid, so that by my keen taste I may discern the cause and remedy for your daughter's malady; but, to tell the truth, her urine is too scanty in amount to pass full judgment on her case.

I would therefore desire more of her water.

(Sabina leaves the room but presently returns with more urine.)

Sabina ; I had great trouble making her void more water.

Sganarelle : What's that? Here's a scanty supply. If all my patients, sir, passed their water in the stingy way of your daughter, I would be a doctor for many years to come.

Sabina (to the father) : Lucille says she can pass no more urine, no matter what the doctor says.

Sganarelle : Sir, your daughter urinates only in drops. She's a poor waterer *certainly*. I see I must order her a strong diuretic. Can I now see the patient?

Sabina : She has risen from her bed and dressed. You may enter her room if you desire.

EPIGRAM ON THE DEATH OF MOLIERE.

Quoi! c'est donc le pauvre Moliere
Qu'on porte dans la cimetiere,
S'ecrierent quelque voisins!
Non, dit certain Apoticaire,
C'est le malade imaginaire
Qui veut railler les Medecins.

EPITAPH ON MOLIERE.

Here lies one who knew the art of creating laughter
At the expense of the whole world.
He seasoned his verses with the pungent salt of satire.
His style was agreeable and never dull.
He played for the healthy and the sick, young and old;
Men and women, the easily pleased and over-critical,
Gentlemen and commoners, marquis and peasant,
Were the subject of his many comedies.
Happy had it been for him had he not attacked doctors;
These latter hypocrites bear him eternal hatred,
Permitting him to descend to the tomb without assistance.

They are doctors without remedies,
Bigots without even a sacrament.

EPIGRAM.

Contre Moliere, un Medecin,
Ayant fait un mauvais dessein,
Avec un pere a Pater-notre,
Tous deux l'attendoient a sa fin :
Mais Moliere fut le plus fin,
Et se passa de l'un et l'autre.

* * *

PASCAL (French philosopher, 1623 to 1662).

PENSEES.

If doctors wore not cassocks and had no mules, they would not have duped the world, which was never able to resist this parade.

If magistrates had true justice, if doctors had true art in curing, the majesty of the science of law and medicine would be vindicated. But, as they have only imaginary sciences, it is necessary for them to use instruments that appeal to those imaginations with which they have to deal; it is by doing this that they induce respect.

* * *

PELLISSON (1624 to 1693).

EPIGRAM.

D'un ennemi voulez vous vous defaire
Ne cherchez point d'assassins.
Donnez lui deux Medecins,
Et qu'ils soient d'avis contraire.

* * *

TABARIN (17th century).

Questions.

THE PATIENT, THE DOCTOR AND HIS
MULE.

Tabarin: My dear master, I could not help admiring the doctor who came to see your sick father yesterday, he was so digni-

fied, so distinguished-looking, as he descended from his mule in front of your door.

The Master: What, Tabarin! You astonish me by such remarks. Why should you admire his appearance in dismounting from his mule? Would you rather the mule attend the patient?

Tabarin: Well, perhaps the mule is more worthy of admiration than the doctor.

The Master: Oh, you stupid! Don't you see that there is nothing strange in a physician visiting a patient on a mule and leaving the animal outside at the door?

Tabarin: I find, by reasoning, that it would be better for the patient to be visited by the mule than the doctor. Let me ask why the doctor goes to see the patient?

The Master: The doctor is a man of science; he has skill wherewith to remove the disease; he gives proper remedies to restore health, and by the compositions he makes he re-enforces Nature and cures the malady.

Tabarin: Speaking in this fashion, you defend my side of the question, for I draw from you an infallible argument that it would be better for the mule to visit the patient than the doctor. Is it not a pity that one beast should stand at the door in the cold while the other warms himself inside at the fireplace and cheers his entrails with a good glass of wine? The reason that you give to support your idea is that the physician sees the patient because that he carries the science; as for me, I insist that the mule should visit the patient, inasmuch as he carries the science, medical doctrine and physician all together.

X. WHO ARE THOSE WHO MOCK DOCTORS
AND APOTHECARIES?

Tabarin: Who are those who, to your mind, mock physicians and apothecaries most?

The Master: Those are the ignorant, who have no faith and rail at doctors' prescriptions; people who ignore the fact that medicine is a Divine art from Heaven, which restores Nature to its perfection. medicine is the science of all natural sciences, and badly understood by those who scoff at its miracles. *Altissimus de celo creavit medicinam et vir prudens non ab horrerit eam.*

Tabarin: I said lately to a sewing girl who made stockings for me, *Homo et vir prudens non abhorrerit eum.*

The Master: By the Powers that be! I hold that those who condemn doctors are ignoramuses.

Tabarin: You deceive yourself, for those who mock doctors are those who themselves need medical aid; they are the sick.

The Master: The sick, Tabarin? How can a patient mock a physician, seeing that he asks his kindly assistance?

Tabarin: Is it not a mockery when these medical asses make you stick your tongue out half a foot for the benefit of those who come to see that organ?

XI. WHO ARE THE BEST DOCTORS.

Tabarin: My dear master!

The Master: What is it, Tabarin?

Tabarin: Only a word, if you please. I have heard it said that you are a perfect judge of healthy fæces.

The Master: Medicine is the best judge, you big ass.

Tabarin: You seem to be a perfect doctor, then.

The Master: In truth, since my youth I have always judged that such a science would be useful to mankind. However, I do not claim superiority as an expert. I arrived at this knowledge as much by constant practice as by speculations; and now-

adays a man is always praised for having employed his time in the serious study of a specialty, and thus contributes a little of his nature to an investigation that may prove profitable.

Tabarin: It is not necessary to spend all your youth in this particular branch of medicine. To study the quality of healthy fæces it is necessary to *frapper a ma porte derriere.*

The Master: Oh, you impertinent fellow! Do you mean to assert I must taste something to obtain knowledge?

Tabarin: By the death of my life! you will find I entertain such a sentiment. But tell me truly, I pray you, who are the best physicians, and how do they distinguish diseases?

The Master: The best doctors are those who have a perfect knowledge of the nature of things, men who know qualities, passions, properties, compositions, temperaments, complexions, and, reflecting on all their knowledge of these things, have a proper judgment on all matters relating to health. And although those who have the theory may be very good, it is those who join theory with long practice that are the best; because they have more perfect notions of illness and accidents and those remedies that alleviate or cure them, for the whole vital essence of medicine consists in experience.

Tabarin: But I desire to know from you how to tell a disease from a sick man?

The Master: We know that when we make a professional visit. We feel the pulse, ask what part of the body has pain, we look at the patient's color, and analyze his urine; we demand if he has an appetite, and make other queries.

Tabarin: Zounds! Truly when the patient tells you his illness it is easy for you to

know where the disease exists. But I can teach you a secret: Know, the very best doctors are the wine makers.

The Master: The wine makers? Give me a proof of this!

Tabarin: When a wine maker goes to visit a cask of his wine, he does not ask it whether it is white or red, he does not say, "Do you feel badly? Are you sour?" etc. He only knows the malady of the wine by its interior properties. He opens the bung-hole of the cask, he puts his nose into the opening and smells; he strikes the belly of the cask with his fist and the vapors are exhaled. Thus he knows whether the wine be good or bad, sick or well. The same thing should be done when you go to visit a sick person. You should not question and discourse over much, but should stand your patient upright, and by putting your head beneath his thighs you can get your nose closer to the fundament, when by pounding the patient on the bare belly you may secure those gaseous, fragrant, and delicious intestinal odors, by which method you can best judge of the disease lodged within, after having smelled with all due professional care. That's the true manner of studying disease and being a good doctor.

The Master: You are a great ass?

Tabarin: Or a sheep's skin for a diploma.

IX. WHEN DOCTORS ARE DECEIVED.

Tabarin: My Master, since you are a professor of the medical sciences, do you know when doctors are deceived and fail greatly in their recipes?

The Master: Physicians are sometimes deceived, Tabarin; for as we are all composed of different temperaments, so is it very difficult to recognize them; for that

which is in the interior, although it may give outward signs, and have concealment for the appearances within, yet often little experience leads one to uncertainty in judgment by trusting in superficial indications. There, for instance, is the hot temperament, to which a doctor, applying drying and heating remedies to prevent the spread of the malady, may really augment the difficulty and pain. Another patient may have a cold temperament within, which exteriorly may indicate warmth, so that a practitioner is really never absolutely certain. A long experience in medicine must serve to best aid one's judgment before a patient can be prescribed for safely; reason is based on a large number of similar cases observed in practice. I believe, for my part, that we sometimes meet diseases where physicians are often deceived, especially in hot and acute maladies, for in such the reason is so much upset by the acuteness of the affection that it cannot be calmly used, for reason is a necessary thing to exercise in order to prevent accidents. Time and meditation are real adjuncts for the healing art; and this leisure in prescribing cannot always be practiced in acute cases where the disease will not permit us to delay medication.

Tabarin: You are a fine doctor; you are wise and well posted. It is not hot maladies where physicians are most often deceived ordinarily, but when they order an active purgative to cleanse the brain of a woman, for instance; where the medicine seeks the brain high and low, to operate, and finds it not. This is the abuse of drugs, my Master.

The Master: To put out one's tongue is a sign of derision.

Tabarin: Yes. When a doctor visits a patient and the patient sticks out his tongue it is often as a sign of mockery.

The Master: And what about the apothecary?

Tabarin: The apothecary has an advantage; for, if he comes with a clyster to a patient whom he visits, the patient presents him his rump, which, under most noses, is very indicative. Are not all these things derisive and mocking?

* * *

MADAME DE SEVIGNE (1626 to 1696).

Letters.

LETTER TO M. DE POMPONNE.

November 24th, 1664.

Madam Fouquet has given a plaster to the Queen that has cured Her Majesty of her convulsions,⁽¹⁾ which were, properly speaking, only hysterical. The physicians in the case, without prescribing a plaster even, refrained from expressing an opinion, and made their visit at the expense of the truth.

LETTERS TO MADAM DE GRIGNAN.

December 2d, 1671.

It is said that the new Madam is altogether astonished at her greatness, and they will now ask how she acts. When she was presented to her physician, she said she was perfectly well and that she had never been bled, purged nor vomited; that, when she felt unwell, she walked two

1 The day after her accouchement Marie Theresa had a convulsive attack, which sadly frightened her attendants; but the rapidity of her recovery, and the method employed, indicate that the so-called spasm was simply a nervous attack, and that a glass of cold water thrown in the Queen's face revived Her Majesty immediately. When Marie Theresa was first presented to the Court Physician she responded: "The first is well said, for so far in my life I have not needed medical attendance."

leagues afoot and was cured: *Lasciamo la andar, che fara buon viaggio.*⁽¹⁾

December 2d, 1672.

He⁽²⁾ has been copiously and rudely bled; he objected to this treatment to the last, which was the 11th, but the physicians insisted; he told them that if they acted towards him thus, that it was only to kill him according to prescribed rules.

April 22d, 1672.

That little Daquin is first physician. "This favor hath done him as much as he merited."⁽³⁾

April 15th, 1676.

My face has not changed. It is because I have not been bled, and that I have not been cured of my malady, and have taken no remedies.

April 22d, 1676.

I only hoped for the cure of my hands, shoulders and knees at Vichy, as my poor nerves have been rudely attacked by rheumatism; so that I can only hope to go thither. The Abbot Bayard and Saint Herem have attended me; I have told you the beauties of this country and promenades, the bracing air, that have brought me to Bourbon. I have seen the most ignorant persons here, who advised me to take different remedies for my hands, and, to satisfy them, I have used some; but I am best contented with Vichy.

April 24th, 1676.

I am much troubled with my hands. They did not wish me to leave before the

1 Let us go and make a good journey (*pleasure trip*).

2 Charles Philippe Augustus Adhemar de Monteil, one of the brothers of M. de Grignan, who was attacked by small-pox and died.

3 Verses from the "Cid."

1st of May, and the house I desired has been let; Bourbon is the place now, but it is a conspiracy, so I will follow the treatment of Vichy.

May 6th, 1676.

Madam du Gue, the nun, is going to Chelles; she is going to open a place there with all kinds of conveniences; she often changes places, so that a young fellow, Amonio, who is physician to the abbey, and whom I yesterday saw at Livry, is not obliged to remain. My dear child, he is a man of twenty-eight, whose face is as beautiful as an angel's, the most charming I have ever seen. He has a garden of herbs at the convent, but he only appears to me to be a "*Lamporechio*."(¹)

May 10th, 1676.

You have then been obliged to undergo phlebotomy? The delicate little hand of your surgeon made me tremble as you did when he approached. The Prince once said to his new surgeon: "Do you not tremble when you bleed me?" And the little surgeon answered: "Pardon, sir, it is you who tremble!" and he told the truth.

August 26th, 1676.

To Vichy, and I do not think I shall return this summer. Vesou said to-day that he wished it were immediately; Lorme said I would die there, that I had then forgotten that I am only on fire and that my rheumatism was come from heat. I love to consult them all, so as to be able to mock them. Can anything be more pleasant than such a variety of amusement?

¹ Mazet de Lamporechio, in "*Contes de la Fontaine*," enters a convent of nuns under guise of a gardener.

Il les engea de petits Mazillons,
Desquels on fit de petits moinillons.

September 25th, 1676.

Ah! what can I say of these doctors! What a set of boasters they are in their art! I was told yesterday of that comedy of "*Malade Imaginaire*," that I have not yet seen acted; it must be an exact imitation of the actions of these medical gentlemen; it fits their case; it is seventeen drops of an elixir in thirteen spoonfuls of water—if there be fourteen spoonfuls the patient was lost. He takes a pill, and is told to walk afterwards about his chamber; but he is in pain and rests for a brief space of time, for he has forgotten whether he must promenade the width or length of his room. Ah! this made me laugh.

September 25th, 1676.

Beaujean has just received extreme unction, and will not live through the night. In truth, it is a terrible disease; but, having seen the manner in which physicians bleed poor persons, and knowing I have no veins, I yesterday declared to a gentleman, who came to see me, that I am in danger of dying, and asked him to bring in Dr. Sanguine.(¹) I am resolved on this course of action. It is only necessary to see these gentlemen in order to keep them from having one's body; it is a back blow they have struck and killed Beaujean. I have thought of Moliere twenty times since I saw this. I hope, nevertheless, that the poor woman will escape all their bad treatment.(²)

November 1st, 1679.

I spoke to Duchesne of our little doctor, to whom our neighborhood has given some patients to kill, in order to see how

¹ Dr. Sanguine—play on words.

² "An emetic," says she, further along in the letter, "resuscitated Beaujean, for she was really almost dead.

he would perform the act. He would have suffered in reputation had he not used his privilege of "slaying with impunity."⁽¹⁾ It is not that the season is contrary to the doctors. This English remedy,⁽²⁾ which will be very soon made public, will make them more wicked with their bleeding and other drugs.

November 24th, 1679.

What pleasure it is to hear you discourse on all the chapters you treat! That on medicine fairly ravishes me. I am persuaded that with the rare intelligence and facility at learning that God has given you, that you can know more than the doctors. Experience may be lacking, and you will not kill with impunity as they do; but I should be more proud to have you judge of my malady than to have them in attendance. It is true that it is only a question of health in this world. "How are you?" "Are you well?" and they entirely ignore all that touches the science that is so necessary. Take your title; there is nothing in the science save to put on a red robe as in the comedy. But why will you send us

1 Allusion is here made to the reception of Argan in the "Malade Imaginaire."

2 The Chevalier Talbot, an English physician who first introduced cinchona into France. After curing the Dauphin (and not Louis XIV, as Maurice Raynaud has said) of a very rebellious intermittent fever, the King purchased his secret for 48,000 livres. The following verses on this subject are by De Bonnacamp:

Autrefois un Talbot, ennemi de la France,
La mit presqu' aux abois par un fer inhumaine;
Un Talbot aujourd'hui, le gobelet en main,
Par des coups plus heureux en sauve l'esperance.
Malheur a Talbot l'assassin!
Vive Talbot le Medecin!

The Faculty of Medicine did not partake of this enthusiasm, and, of course, condemned the new remedy. "This powder of kinikina," says

your jolly doctor? I am answered that the profession is much deceived and held in contempt here; aside from three or four whom you know, who prescribe the English remedy, the rest of the medical fraternity hold it in holy horror.

February 9th, 1680.

Brother Ange has resuscitated Marechal Bellefond and entirely cured his chest, which was to him an object of despair. We went to call, Madam De Coulangue and I, on the Grand Duke, whom it was thought would die the last fifteen days; his gout had gone upwards, he was so oppressed in his lungs that every breath seemed his last sigh; he had cold sweats and was unconscious; he was as sick as it was possible to be. The physician could do nothing for him, and he called in Brother Ange, who cured him with the most simple and pleasant remedies. His oppression ceased, the gout went back to his legs and feet, and now he is out of danger.

The Englishman has promised, on the stake of his head to the King, to cure Monseigneur in four days of his fever; and I really believe if he does not keep his promise he will be thrown out of the window; but if his prophecies come as true as those he has heretofore made to all the patients he has treated, I should deem him entitled to a temple equal to that erected to Æsculapius. What a pity Moliere is dead, as he would make a marvelous scene of Daquin, who is enraged at not having an equal remedy, and all the other physicians, who are overpowered by the experience and success and divine prophecies of

Guy Patin spitefully, "has no credit on this side of the water. Fools seek it because it is very expensive, but, in fact, its use is generally ridiculed to-day."

this little Englishman.⁽¹⁾ The King made him compound his remedy before him, and confided to his hands the health of Monseigneur. Madam the Dauphine is already better, and the Count De Grammont said yesterday, under the very nose of Daquin:

Talbot est vainqueur du trepas,
Daquin ne lui resiste pas;
La Dauphine est convalescente,
Que chacun chante, etc.⁽²⁾

November 5th, 1684.

You will then be obliged to cure yourself with your own remedies; this third bleeding, following the second so shortly, and your badly prepared remedies are responsible. You have been badly treated, my poor girl, in all fashions.

December 13th, 1688.

Be not distressed on account of the health of your child; neither bleed nor give it medicines; nothing at all; a good appetite, sound sleep, vigor in fatigue; that is what the doctor will rob it of if he be called in attendance.

October 12th, 1689.

The Abbot Bigorre informs me that M. de Niel fell, the other day, in the King's chamber and suffered from a contusion. Felix⁽³⁾ bled him and cut an artery, so that an immediate capital surgical operation was required. What do you think of this, Madam de Grignan? I do not know of what to most complain, whether it should be his suffering or of a first physician of

a King who mistakes arteries for veins. Madam de Sully is very ill, all owing to the bad methods of the doctors. She has been *milked, bled, and purged*. She is not reasonable on medical points, although she will listen well to any other advice.

TO THE COUNT DE BUSSY.

There have been continual fetes, except at the time of the accouchment of the Dauphiness; for the doctor, not being able to inflict other injury, bled her at the end of the third and during the eighth month, so eager are they to always be doing some mischief.

* * *

REGNIER DESMARAIS (1632 to 1713).

EPIGRAM.

When in public, more than elsewhere, a physician shines brilliantly and knows how to recite from Hippocrates and Galen, I believe in him. But when he professes to be more expert and skilful in his art than others, yet fills the town with mourners, I do not believe in him.

EPIGRAM.

Believe me, my Doris most charming,
'Tis best that your doctors should vanish;
They're assassins, the timid alarming,
For them all credulity banish.

In their eloquence is deep designing,
Pay no heed to the jargon they say,
Unless health you think of resigning;
So into their hands never play.

In vain false conjectures e'er making,
By judging within from without;
All light and real knowledge forsaking,
Thus involving what's certain in doubt.

All futile their efforts at reading
What's writ on humanity's scroll;

1 Dr. Talbot.

2 Parody on the chorus of "Alcestes," act v, scene 1st.

3 Felix de Tassy. It was this surgeon who operated on the King for fistula, November 18th, 1686.

Never, even to Nature, conceding
That the body is ruled by the soul.

'Tis true they display a great learning
When the vitals by Death are exposed—
Post mortems the real truth discerning.
Poor cadavers! on whom they've imposed.

The blood through your beautiful veins creeping
Was never intended for waste.
Put it not in the cruel doctor's keeping;
Pray ne'er of their vile senna taste.

Then be ever trustful, confiding
To that Nature that gave you a birth.
The more you keep medicine deriding
The longer you'll stay on this earth.

* * *

BOUDIER RENE (1634 to 1723).

EPIGRAM ON CHRISTOPHER OZANNE,
PHYSICIAN OF CHAUDRAY. (1)

With sweet roots and herbs, powdered most finely,
Without any Latin, but knowledge more sure,
A rustic Æsculapius treats all ills divinely,
And, even the evils of medicine(?) doth cure.

ON THE SAME.

Chris Ozanne's a wonderful fellow, indeed!
He will tell you regarding the ills that you
feel;

1 This empiric, who lived at the small hamlet of Chaudray, enjoyed a wonderful reputation in his time. The Abbot of Bordelon devoted a whole volume to this quack, entitled "*Les Maladies en belle humeur.*" The seventh of Bordelon's letters contains the following: "When you are carried to Chaudray sick and crippled, you will return from that healing fool perfectly healthy. It is Master Christopher treats you there, *contrary to all medical rules*, and you therefore are sure to recover."

2 Above a portrait of this Ozanne, painted by the celebrated Audran, are the following verses:

Sans Grec, ni Latin, ni grands mots,
Avec une herbe, une racine,
Ozanne guerit de tous maux
Et surtout de la Médecine.

Though having no doctor's diploma to bleed,
And, though a clod-hopper, he ever doth heal.

* * *

BOILEAU (1636 to 1711).

A BURLESQUE DECISION.

Viewed by the Court, the request presented by the Regents, Masters in Arts, Doctors and Professors of the University, in their own names and as tutors *en blanc* of Aristotle, ancient and Royal Professor of Greek in the College of Lycia and Preceptor of that King of quarrelsome memory, Alexander the Great, conqueror of Europe, Asia and Africa, besides sundry other places not herein enumerated, we recognize the fact that an unknown party, called *Reason*, has entered by force the portals of the aforesaid University; and, in doing this, has been assisted by certain facetious *quidams*, bearing the names of Gassendists, Cartesians, Malabbranchists and Pourchotists, persons without foresight, who conspire to expel the previously mentioned Aristotle, former ancient and peaceable possessor of the aforesaid School, to which end these and their consorts have already published several books, treatises, dissertations and defamatory articles, citing the above-mentioned Aristotle to submit to an examination before them on his doctrines, which will be in direct opposition to all the laws and customs of the previously mentioned University or the aforesaid Aristotle, as the latter has always been recognized as one from whose judgment no appeal can be taken and one not to be held responsible for his opinions; these persons have, without consultation, changed and created innovations in the natural order things, having agreed that the heart was not the principal nerve centre, as the Grecian author has decided literally and at

his own free will; these iconoclasts have ceded this right and privilege to the brain, and afterwards, by a procedure made in all nullity, have attributed to the aforesaid heart the mission of receiving, among other things, the chile, which before had belonged to the liver, so that the blood charging around through the body with full power may circulate with impunity by means of veins and arteries, yet having no other right nor title to perform the aforesaid vexatious actions.⁽¹⁾

FROM "L'ART POETIQUE."

In Florence once lived a doctor, a learned man but a celebrated assassin. For a long period of time he had caused the public great misery; on one hand an orphan girl asked for her father, on the other a brother wept for a poisoned brother—one died empty of blood, the other expired full of senna; whenever this doctor appeared in the presence of rheumatism that disease turned to pleurisy, and in his hands an ordinary headache became a frenzied delirium. He finally left Florence, detested by all its inhabitants. To him only one friend remained, all the others having died. This friend was a wealthy abbot, who was a monomaniac on the subject of architecture; the doctor at once conceived a great admiration for the build-

ing art. On the roof of the abbot's house he constructed what is known as a Mansard; he placed vestibules here and approved of stairways there. The abbot called in a mason, who agreed with all the medical architect's plans. The medical assassin now left the doctor's trade forever; he renounced drugs, and instead could always be found rule and compass in hand; leaving to Galen the suspected science, he became a good architect. His example affords all bunglers an excellent precept, for to young doctors we may say, without fear of contradiction, You had best be an architect or stone-mason if your talent lays that way.

LETTER TO THE MARSHAL DE VIVONNE.

You must know, then, Monsieur, there is a doctor at Paris named P.,⁽¹⁾ a great enemy of health and the opponent of good sense; but, in recompense for this, he has a great friend in M. Quinault. A movement of pity for his country, or rather the small gains he made at his trade, finally made him embrace another occupation. He frequented the offices of Le Vau and Ratabon,⁽²⁾ and finally became an architect, so that in a few years he erected more poor buildings than as a doctor he had ruined good healths. He is not the first physician who has quitted his trade for that of the trowel and architecture.⁽³⁾

LETTERS TO RACINE.

Since my last epistle I have been bled, purged, etc.; in fact, none of the pretend-

1 This extract from a long and not very interesting burlesque will suffice for the average English reader. "This curious piece," says Raynaud, "so well expressed in the judicial language of that epoch, which Boileau has so well utilized, had almost the same origin as the 'Maladie Imaginaire.' It was conceived and executed with the assistance of that witty physician, Bernier, the true friend of Moliere, and, like the dramatists, a pupil of Gassendi." At the present day a full rendering in English translation would neither entertain nor instruct, hence a good reason for the omission.

1 Claude Perrault.

2 Two celebrated architects.

3 Louis Savot, physician to the King, died at Paris in 1640; he translated the works of Galen, and afterwards gave up the profession for that of architecture.

ed formalities have been omitted prior to taking the water. The medicine I have taken to-day will do me, so it is said, a world of good; so I fell down four or five times from weakness, and I am in such a healthy state that I have trouble in living.

The waters here have done me great good, according to all rules, since they deprive me of rest and drive everything out of my body, except the disease for which I am taking the fluid. Dr. Bourdier, my physician, insists that my voice is stronger than when I arrived; Bandiere, my apothecary, *who is deaf*, pretends the same thing; but they strive to flatter me, or rather flatter themselves, etc.

LINES ON ONE OF MY COUSINS WHO DIED
IN A CHARLATAN'S HANDS. (1)

(Sonnet.)

Nursed in the same cradle with thee, my Orantes,
And no less by heart than by blood close
allied;

With thee my dear cousin, my sweetheart in
fancy,
I tasted the full sweets of youth's morning tide.

But a false Æsculapius, an ignorant creature,
Has torn thee away by his failure to cure;
Farewell the bright days that come no more,
darling.

Ah! can I e'er conquer the grief I endure?

This rude blow has driven the tears to my eyes,
And the pen in my hand faint expresses my
pain.

Ah! cursed be this doctor's perfidious act!
Is the sentence; I write it again and again.

For fifteen long years, love, my plaint has been
heard;

In the ardor of vengeance each doctor I curse.

I "This sonnet was made on account of one of my nieces, who was about my age, and the charlatan was a famous professor of the Faculty." (Boileau: "Lettre a Broisette," 1702.)

Ah! the barbarous wretch that tore thee from my
arms
Is the medical demon inspiring this verse.

TO MADAM MANCHON, HIS SISTER.

Bourbon, July 31st, 1687.

So shall I regard, in the future, the mineral waters and other remedies that I swallowed as a penance imposed rather than agents that could cure my corporeal failures. Certain it is that it is better to resign one's self to the will of God rather than submit to this medical yoke, which is the same here as at Paris, except as to the doctors, who are more attentive to their patients, perhaps, and think less of their maladies during the time of their visits.

Epigram XX.

IMITATION OF MARTIAL.

Paul, the great doctor, the whole city alarmed;
His treatment far worse than the pestilence
harmd.

He's a sexton now, burying men in the ground;
As skilful at this trick as ever he's found.

TO A M. PERRAULT. (1)

Thine uncle(2) sayest thou hath cured me of my
ill.

The proof he's not my doctor is, that I'm living
still.

* * *

BOURSAULT(3) (1638 to 1701).

LETTERS.

You have done me the honor to inform me in your last communication that you had written me before relative to the malady of Monsieur Dupre, and I now freely avow to you that I know no more

1 Translator of Vitruvius and brother to the poet.

2 Claude Perrault, the architect-physician.

3 See the "Medecin Volant" of Boersault.

about his case than I have already written. I have so often hoped for his perfect convalescence, yet dared not hazard an opinion, inasmuch as that depends on one's faith in the doctors. Since the beginning of his illness up to the present moment they have predicted nothing that subsequent events justified; and all that I can feel assured of is, that no immediate danger exists. In truth, however, I dare not hope that his cure will be rapid in a season when health is more liable to fail than to be restored. It is eight days since your friend was placed on a diet of ass's milk, and if we are to believe Dr. Lancereau his chest is much better; but, as I am resolved to no longer judge remedies save by their effects, if you are satisfied I will allow a few more days to pass before I put faith in the physician's words. Yesterday a consultation was held between his three doctors, who have already evidenced their uselessness, and keep continually saying: "Clisterium donare, postea sanguine, ensuite purgare." Take this away from them and one-half their boasted science vanishes. Although our poor friend is emaciated, they have ordered him bled anew; and, in the state he is, it seems to me that Nature should be fortified rather than weakened. We will see, in the end, if the Medical Faculty are right; but up to this time they have only inspired my profound contempt.

REMARKS AND BON MOTS.

An almoner of Cardinal Ranuzzi, whom your Highness has met in France, was attacked by an affection that, at first sight, did not appear dangerous, but which, thanks to the aid of the physicians, became mortal. When informed that it was useless for him to even dream of living, he made up his mind to die and

sent for a priest, Father Grenade Theatin, who never left the sick man until the latter expired in his arms, although the poor fellow awaited his death with the greatest resignation at the will of God. The hour of final agony having arrived, Father Theatin recommended the soul of the dying to its creator in the beautiful prayer, "*Proficiscere anima Christiana*," etc., which signifies, liberally rendered, Leave promptly, Christian soul. When the dying man responded in a mournful voice, "*Pian piano, anima mia, pian piano!*" (A little slow, my soul, go slowly!)

* * *

BRUEYS (1640 to 1723).

THE GRUMBLER.

(Comedy in three acts.)

ACT II. Scene 4.

Lolive: Make haste! make haste! Monsieur Grichard. William has fallen from his mule. The little accident occurred only a few steps away from here. He was riding past the door of one of our neighbors when a little Spanish dog yelped at him; the mule became frightened and shied, made a turn to one side, and William went head over heels the opposite way.

Hortense: Is he injured?*Lolive*: No; but he is furious at the dog!*Catau*: He'll soon convalesce from that!*Lolive*: That's what he wants to do. That's what William says.*Catau*: Perhaps he has sent for some other physician.*Lolive*: No, but he is impatient; and, seeing that *you have delayed about going, he has departed*.*Catau*: He is dead then?

Lolive: You have told the truth.

Catau: Ah! that happens every day.

ACT II.—Scene 10.

Dr. Grichard (in a fury): I will stand this no longer. Go, you rascal. Go to your captain, your Viceroy, to all your fellows—you cannot allay the wrath of a doctor!

Lolive: Sir, you are a man of honor, and, when you have engaged to go, you will go.

Dr. Grichard: Yes, traitor, I shall go immediately, and assemble the entire Medical Faculty.

Lolive: And I shall call out my regiment, then; we shall see who will win.

Dr. Grichard: This will interest my medical confreres.

Lolive: Yes, Monsier, do so, if you will only bring a few of them with you; there will still remain too many for the good of Paris.

Scene 16 and Last.

Dr. Grichard: The Devil! *It will cost more than four lives.*⁽¹⁾

Catau: Of your patients, perhaps.

* * *

LE NOBLE EUSTACHE (1643 to 1711).

ÆSOPUS—COMEDY IN THREE ACTS,
1691.

Rodopus: Ah! who would know you in this garb? Your figure is laughable and most grotesque.

Columbine (as a hump-backed doctor, or Clistorel): You will find it very amusing in the success that awaits me. But wait until you see me discourse on my doctrines.

Rodopus: Ah! Columbine—or Clistorel, as I should call you—*parlez vous Medecine?* Do you know how to speak in medical jargon?

Columbine: My Greek jargon is of the first order. I can furnish the finest samples to order. You shall see with what a finished air I shall give the language of these assassins. It is not science in medicine that makes a renowned physician. No! he only needs arrogance, self-assertion, and a patronizing manner—one who can shoot off ten overpowering words slowly, or, at times, precipitate the same with all due impertinence. Thus, he passes for a man of great importance, and in two or three years' time, by trotting around on mule-back, we shall see him attain the dignity of a four-horse chariot. But here comes Æsop towards us.

Columbine (disguised as Clistorel, a doctor to Æsop): Ah! My dear sir, the atmosphere of your rare bounty fills my diaphragm's most profound capacity. Receive, Your Highness, the first drachm of respect to which your position entitles you, and merit a full-measured decoction of my civility.

Æsop: A beautiful beginning! How ably you play your part! You speak in medical phrase most truly, and could serve a neat compliment even in an injection.

Rodopus (to Clistorel, or Columbine): Courage! he is with us. You have made a most successful debut.

Æsop: But, before I can explain all, tell me as to your medical standing. Where, in the name of Æsculapius, did you buy your doctor's bonnet and cloak? Tell me, are you a common empiric or a real doctor of our Faculty?

Columbine (or Clistorel): To be both would not embarrass me. I know as much of one as of the other. I can pierce the

¹ See the apothegms of Francis Bacon, in previous note.

secrets of Nature by the strength of my acids. I know how to aid digestion. I can make alkalies. I can impregnate solids and render them coaguable. Do you desire treatment by pure chemical methods? I know all about metals, pearls and minerals, stones and vegetables, serpents and animals, salts, sulphurs and waters. I cure all maladies, as follows :

By frequent bleedings,
By serious lithotomies.
I am Greek in anatomy,
I am Latin in physiology.
I have purgative remedies,
I have lenitives and emetics,
Nutritives and soporifics,
Fermentatives and fomentatives,
Suppuratives and detersive,
Aperitives and restrictives,
Specifics and caustics,
Diuretics and hepatics,
Cephalics and podagratives,
Febrifuges and cordials.

I can apply all my talents to each and every one alike. I make a choice from among these for my patients, and I am truly a great genius in the medical line. If you have need of my valuable services, call on me ; I will treat you properly.

Rodopus (to Æsop) : Hear him, Signor Æsop ! Listen how rapidly he has learned and developed true medical doctrines.

Æsop : No ; I do not care to expose myself to his perfidy. What good can my death do him ?

* * *

ANTOINE BAUDERON DE
SENECE (1643 to 1737).

THE OLD DOCTOR.

The physician Nicodemus, oftentimes an assassin, has seen a hundred carnivals since the day of his baptism. Be not astonished at this, since his balm of Hip-

pocrates, his salve of Mithridates, his Alkermes and Opiates, never saved his ignorant patients. But death, in recognition of his valuable services, has paid him by giving in return a long life.

THE SLAYER OF MEN.

At the house of a good citizen of Beauvais a Dragoon behaved very badly, beating and otherwise maltreating the host, who cried, "Murder ! Help !" The neighbors all ran to the scene, attracted by the noise, and endeavored to calm the excitement. The bravest appearing one of the number was a delicate looking man, who said to the Dragoon : "Know, comrade, that I am the man who can settle you ! This is no place to quarrel, but upon my honor I swear that I've killed more people than you." At these words the soldier was mad with wrath. "Ah !" cried he, "miserable abortion ! Give me my pistols ! Give me a musket ! We shall soon see which is the best man of the two. I will make you hold your tongue forever." A stalwart fellow threw himself between the Dragoon and his delicate looking opponent and said to the former : "Great God ! man, do you know that you are about to fight with a physician ?" This sally created such laughter that good humor was restored, the landlord of the inn brought out tankards of wine, and the Dragoon himself was calmed.

* * *

DELORME (Born about 1642 A.D.).

THE INFALLIBLE DOCTOR.

The physician Scribart, owing to rheumatism, died last night, aged thirty years. He was the author of an excellent volume, entitled "*The Art of Living to an Old Age.*"

LA BRUYERE (1645 to 1696).

IRENE AND ÆSCULAPIUS.

Irene was brought at great expense to Epidaurus, to visit Æsculapius in his temple and consult regarding her illness. First she complained of being wearied and suffering from lassitude; and the God told her this came from the long journey she had taken. She said she had no appetite at evening; and the Oracle ordered her to take but a little dinner. Irene claimed to suffer from insomnia; and Æsculapius ordered her never to rest on her bed except at night. She said she was growing stout and that her limbs dragged; she was requested to take a long walk before noon. She declared that wine drinking injured her; whereat the God advised her to confine her libations to water. She said she had indigestion, and was ordered to regulate her diet. "My sight is enfeebled," observed Irene. "Stop wearing glasses," said the God. "I am growing weaker!" exclaimed she. "True," said the Oracle; "it is because you are growing old." "But how can I cure my languor?" demanded Irene, with evident signs of impatience. "The quickest way," answered Æsculapius, "is to die, like your mother and your grandmother." Then cried Irene: "Great son of Apollo, is this the only advice you can give me? Is this all your boasted science of medicine? Is it for this that the earth reveres your learning? Is it this that has brought me to you for council on things mysterious? Do I not know myself all the remedies you have prescribed in my case?" Then Æsculapius replied with dignity: "It was useless for you to come such a distance, unless you intended to shorten your days by a long voyage!"

REGARDING CERTAIN CUSTOMS.

The world has always improved the condition of physicians, and we serve them in order that they may live; the theatre and satire do not cut off their fees and pensions; they give their daughters handsome doweries, place their sons in Parliament or in the Priesthood, and the people that rail at their trade furnish the money. Those who are well must sometimes become patients, and will be the first to call in a doctor to discover whether Death is near. So long as men must die but still desire to live, so long will the doctor be bitterly ridiculed but nevertheless well paid for his services.

The rashness of doctors and the sad lack of success which follows necessarily, makes us value physicians as well as their remedies. If the former permit us to die the latter are certain to kill us.

Carro Carri debarked with a receipt that he called a prompt remedy, and which was sometimes a slow poison. With a specific that was good for colic he cured quartan fever, pleurisy, dropsy, apoplexy, and epilepsy. Force your memory to name some malady, say the first that comes in your mind; hemorrhage, say you? He claims to cure. He resuscitates no one, it is true; he gives not life to man, but leads them of necessity to decrepitude. It was by chance that his father and grandfather, who held this specific remedy as a family secret, both died very young.

Doctors receive for their visits that which is given them; some few thank you for the gift. Carro Carri is so certain of his specific and the effects that follow that he makes his patients pay always in advance; he receives, in other words, before he gives. If the disease is incurable so

much the better; it is more worthy of an application and of his remedy. Commence by giving him a few bags of a thousand franc pieces, give him a written contract, one of your estates, and remain satisfied—that you will be cured. The emulation of this man is to people the world with the names O and I, venerable letters that he imposes on all diseases and patients.

Our great physician Fagon, and others more modest in the Faculty, admit that they cannot *always* cure; those who inherit secret family remedies and inherit their medical talent from their ancestors, whose experience by succession is lacking, promise always, with sworn statements and affidavits, that they can cure, that all mankind can hope for hope even in mortal diseases, and thus escape the final agonies! Death surprises some agreeably, without permitting itself to be feared.

* * *

BERNIER JEAN⁽¹⁾ (1647 to 1698).

MEDICAL DOGMAS.

A poet of the time of Nerveze (1570 to 1625) thus paints the physician of that period:

Leurs dogmes dont par eux nos corps sont dis-
sipez,
Sont des recipez faux et de vrais decipez,
Butinans sur chacun c'est tout leur envie,
De vous faire mourir pour se donner la vie.
Voila comme par eux les hommes sont tous Saints,
Venus au lendemain du jour de la Toussaint.

A great Prince of our times said that medicine had four divisions, of which the first three consisted in charlatany and the fourth in braggadocio.

¹ This physician published in 1689 his "Essays on Medicine," from which these extracts are derived.

A Spanish doctor, having no hope for his patient, whom he deemed mortally ill, came to make the unfortunate a final visit, and hitched, as usual, his mule outside the door, when he was called to make haste, as a patient was dying in another part of the residence. He ran into the house, and the mule, that had not been well tied, also trotted into the first patient's chamber, making a terrible noise as it approached the bed, and braying loudly at seeing a form move on the mattress. At this ridiculous mulish noise the sick man opened his eyes (he had been semi-comatose before), and endeavored in his fright to escape from what he considered a Demon. This sudden movement assisted the effort of Nature and broke an internal abscess that had escaped the physician's notice, the contents of which entered the bowels and poured off through the natural channels.

Meantime, the doctor and nurse had come down stairs, and were surprized at seeing the mule still standing over the sick man's bed. The mule was driven out and the physician, feeling the patient's pulse, discovered him to be better. He was astounded, as he had, as before remarked, regarded the termination as fatal. Now, the convalescent, hearing his doctor boasting of his sudden improvement, remarked: "Sir, it was not the last remedy that you ordered me, but it was the kindly act of your mule; and as you are only a small ass in comparison with your magnificent and stalwart animal, I pledge you my word as an honest Spanish gentleman, that should I again become ill I shall call in that skillful mule in preference to yourself.

Souverains juges du bien dire,
Que le blondin Phebus inspire,
Sur le choix des mots les plus fins
Lequel des deux faut il qu'on die.

Jules mourut de telle maladie,
Ou mourut de tels Medecins.

A woman once advised her daughter not to marry a physician, using the following language: "How weary you will become of the chagrins you must participate in on account of your husband; think of the smarting displeasures and storms of ridicule that will be heaped upon his head; think of the confusion and excitement in which his life is ever spent. He will make mistakes in predictions; he will be consulted in regard to Nature, and be only able to respond by conjectures. In striving to save, he will often condemn his patients to death. His perfume will be very strong, and he will converse with you in bad Latin.

* * *

DUFRESNY CHARLES RIVIERE (1648 to 1724).

Amusements, Serious and Comical.

WAGGISH THOUGHT ON CHARLATANS.

The absence of physicians is a sovereign remedy for those who do not call in a charlatan. This is not saying there may not be good charlatans. That stranger in the story, for example, was very sincere; he sold fountain water at thirty sous a bottle; he claimed there were occult virtues contained in the fluid, which cured the worst maladies; he swore, and swore truly, that this very water had cured his greatest infirmity, which was — *poverty*.

THE FACULTY.

Situation of the country of the Faculty. The country of doctors is situated on the road from this world to the other. It is a peculiar climate, where they breathe a refreshing air which is very prejudicial to

natural heat. Those who travel in this country spend all they have while starving to death.

Language of the country.—The doctor's language is very learned, and yet those who speak it are very ignorant men. Ordinarily, people learn a language in order to express what they know clearly; but, in the doctor's country, they learn a jargon which only serves to mystify that which they themselves do not know.

A FEVER PATIENT'S VISION.

When I talk to a patient of good sense, I have to combat at once the arguments of the physician, the disease, the remedy and the sufferer's inanition. One of my friends, who had brain trouble once, had a vision in his fever that saved his life. He thought he saw his fever, under the form of a pursuing monster, chasing him step by step, and that a charitable person seized him by the waist to pull him out of a river which was a running torrent of blood; but the patient dreamt he had not the strength to help himself and was drowned. The charitable friend, who was in the guise of a doctor, robbed the dead man's pockets and ran to assist another patient who had fallen into a river of warm chicken broth. My friend took a hint from this dream, for he discharged his doctor and recovered.

IS IT BETTER TO ABANDON ONE'S SELF TO NATURE THAN TO THE DOCTORS?

In Paris the fashion in doctors is like that in almanacs, the newest are the most consulted; but their reign, like that of the almanac, only lasts for the current year.

When a person leaves all his ills to Nature he risks much; when he confides entirely to the doctors he also takes many chances. But, chance for chance, I love Nature best, inasmuch as I know it acts in

as good faith as it can, and does not make its profit by prolonging one's illness.

THE DEPARTURE OF THE COMEDIANS. —
COMEDY IN ONE ACT, 1694.

Scene 2.

Colombine: Thou shouldst seek some remedy for our ills.

Harlequin: Alas! we are the patients, and there are the doctors (*pointing to dress-circle*). It is only a number of physicians that could cure our several maladies.

Colombine: We will bear our illness patiently, if we can have a consultation of four or five physicians every day.

Harlequin: Not of these doctors (*pointing to parquet*)! These doctors are not so learned as the Professors of the Faculty of Medicine.

Colombine: I know the reason well! These dramatic doctors (*pointing to the entire audience*) pay us—at the door; but the doctors of medicine charge us before they enter our sick chamber.

THE MORAL PHYSICIANS.—COMEDY IN
THREE ACTS, 1697.

ACT I.—*Scene 7.*

Chorus: It is said that the doctor, from malice, is an assassin, but this is a mistake. They say that his ignorance causes more mortality than war or pestilence. This is the pure truth.

ACT II. *Scene 5.*

Pasquin (showing a miniature): Here is Monsieur, the murderer, the doctor!

This doctor, who knows well how to bring Death, Talks of bringing children in the same breath; Talks of begetting to each husband and wife, Knowing, for death, that one must have life.

ACT III. *Scene 3.*

Pasquin: Doctors are like almanacs—

the most recently arrived the most consulted. Novelty is the folly of the French, who prefer green peas to dried peas, the latest journal to the older gazette; who love the girl of sweet sixteen more than her experienced mother.

Scene 8.

The doctor, full of science,

Who trusts we're always well,

And quotes us old Hippocrates,

Who on Galen long doth dwell,

Reminds us of that husband,

That stupid, without sense,

Who sought to satisfy his wife

With naught but eloquence.

Ah! husbands and doctors,

It is I that you assure

Your eloquence amounts to naught,

To Nature leave the cure.

If the patient be a coquette,

And, at bottom, full of fun,

No medicine will ease her

If her head to Folly run.

You may quote Greek and Latin

E'en by the inch or yard;

But pills and clysters never heal

A heart that groweth hard.

Ah! husbands and doctors,

Your arts are imposture,

Your eloquence amounts to naught,

To Nature leave the cure.

SIMILARITY BETWEEN DOCTORS AND
HOUSE STEWARDS.

There is a similarity between physicians and stewards: A steward will ruin the best established house, and the doctor ruins the best constituted body. The ruined houses enrich the steward, the ruined body enriches the doctor. All physicians should be obliged to marry; is it not justice that they should give to the State a few men in place of the many they daily remove? I can pardon those who at the end of their lives give themselves over to the physician's care, even as I can pardon the gam-

bler for stopping play when old age prevents his handling his cards skilfully.

* * *

PIERRE DE VILLIERS (1648 to 1728).

THE DIFFERENCE.

When a doctor visits his patients on foot,
He suffers from dozens of insults and ills :
He hears of rich patients he thinks he could cure,
Who are slain by the chariot doctor who kills.

But when he grows rich and rideth along,
With two horses pulling his elegant chaise,
'Tis then that he changes the tune of his song,
And thinks one's surroundings alter the case.

So he prudently counsels each patient that comes,
Finding science is best in an elegant drag,
Contented to kill in a carriage he roams,
And, smilingly, whippeth each mettlesome nag.

* * *

ANONYMOUS (1649).

UNIVERSAL RAILLERY.

(Extract.)

Si les Césars en une ligne,
Signoient la fin de nostre sort,
Que fait un Medecin qui signe
Un ordinance de la mort ?

Si l'objet de l'Anatomiste
Est de mesme que d'un boucher,
C'est que tout leur employ consiste
A ne rien faire que hacher.

Si Dieu guerit la maladie
Comme le souverain agent,
Ou voit une main hardie
Au Medecin qui prend l'argent.

* * *

PALAPRAT JEAN (1650 to 1721).

HARLEQUIN PHÆTON.—COMEDY IN
THREE ACTS.

ACT III. *Scene 3.*

Æsculapius : Believe me, you are well !
Do you think you have only been asleep,

my brother ? Know that you were dead,
and I resuscitated you with my medicines.

Phæton : For one you resuscitate scores
of others must die.

Scene 9.

Doris : We have been greatly embarrassed as to a choice of trades. Had *Æsculapius* taught *Phæton* medicine he might have gained his living ; besides that, *Phæton* would have been learned, too.

Momus : Many an ignorant fellow is enriched by this medical trade.

Æsculapius : The trade was a meritorious one in former ages, but to-day it is much decried. Even children knew then that *oxicrat* was only a mixture of vinegar and water ; now all the world deals in a multitude of special drugs.

Momus : Added to this, your modern doctor delights in fraud. Some persons will kill off an army without the assistance of the physician ; another will kill himself with excesses in four and twenty hours ; but in extraordinary ills, taking charlatan for charlatan, give me the pure empiric.

Phæton : In ordinary maladies, — the common, every-day afflictions of life, — we knew as much as you formerly, and all the world applied most simple remedies ; so that the first furniture of a well-equipped mansion was an easy-working syringe.

Momus : But now there exists a true alliance with the Medical Faculty. When fever comes they seize upon the patient while a drop of humor or red blood flows within his veins ; they take great pains prescribing their vaunted quinia, which is duly adulterated beforehand by the apothecaries ; the mortal effect of this cursed febrifuge is noted, inasmuch as pharmacy has sophisticated on the virtue of the drug.

Phæton : You are right. But I do not

enrich myself in that manner, as *I only treat secret diseases*. I advertise on my cards that I only see men, but Madam Phaeton, my wife, will examine all the ladies.

Momus: For shame! Yours is a vile bawdy trade, although it is true it offsets the tricks of the rascally apothecary.

A GIRL OF GOOD SENSE.—COMEDY IN
THREE ACTS.

ACT I. *Scene 2.*

Pierrot: Now, Master, you always promised me your doctor's robe when you married, and you will enter wedlock to-morrow with the pretty Angelica. Then I shall throw aside my working-jacket and be a doctor like you are.

The Doctor: *Barone, ti credi d'esser Dottore per averne il vestito?* (Fool! Do you think to be a doctor by *wearing one's clothes?*)

Pierrot: Why not? There are a thousand doctors to-day who enter the profession with no more ceremony or preparation; I know fifty here in Paris to-day—they are only physicians in equipage and clothing. I see asses who are doctors all the time, *in utroque et in medicina si voluissent* (one and the other in medicine as they will).

* * *

BARATON (1650 to 1720).

VERSELETS.

Ou portoit a' l'Eglise un mort de qualite,
Qui dans sa maladie avoit ete traite
Comme le sont les Grands, avec mainte beuve,
Deux Medecins amis, et de la Faculte,
S'etant recontrez dans la rue,
L'un d'eux goguenard et boufon,
Dit en riant a son confrere;
Cet homme que l'on port en terre
N'est—il pas mort de ta facon?

THE DOUBLE DROPSY.

An old fellow with dropsical effusion
Fell ill and was ready to die.
All his doctors came to the conclusion
He was soon to yield up his last sigh.

'Twas then that he made the decision,
To go down to Lyons to dwell,
As he'd heard that there dwelt a physician
Who would kill when he could not make well.

So he hitched up his family carriage
And sought for this doctor post-haste,
With his pretty young wife, whom marriage
Had never made full in the waist.

Now the doctor was handsome and jolly;
The old man's wife cooed like a dove;
Before she was sad—melancholy,
But now she o'erflowed with her love.

For in nine months her husband was cured,
And his dropsy was perfectly well;
While the young wife her nausea endured
For with something her belly did swell.

Ah! can one a skillful young doctor blame,
When he transmits a swelling from husband to
dame?

* * *

CINTHIO (Old Italian dramatist).

THE REMEDY FOR ALL ILLS.—COMEDY IN
THREE ACTS.

(Harlequin, disguised as a doctor, mounted on an ass, and is accompanied by Trivelin; they lead another animal carrying a standard.)

Harlequin: I am a doctor, a surgeon, apothecary and barber; I am perfectly acquainted with all infirmities and every malady. I have cured with my *périn-pin-pin-powder* a case of sea-sickness⁽¹⁾ in eight days in a young

¹ A play on French words is noted here in the original. *Mal de mer* means sea-sickness, while *mere* means mother; an illness caused by a mother is here rendered as *mal de mere*. The pun is obvious to all readers of French.

man aged fifteen years. [*Here Trivelin interrupts Harlequin, and the doctor admits that only girls and old women have this affection.*] "You are deceived," responds Harlequin, "for the mother of this young man has hit him a violent blow on the head with a stick. I believe I can call that *mal de mere* (sea-sickness). In the same skillful manner I cured a fellow who had *headache in his stomach.*" "How can that be?" says the doctor. "Why, he was hooked in the belly with a bull's horn," replied the mock physician. "I have cured *toothache in the hand,*" says Harlequin (*all the audience laugh*). "Yes, gentlemen, I will convince you of this, for a dog bit one of my patients in the left hand. Gentlemen, believe me, this wonderful powder of mine comforts the stomach, establishes natural heat, aids the spleen and liver, and makes the lungs breathe. This powder is a remedy for all nations, especially as it is French. Ah! gentlemen, I am a hard student, I observe the revolution of the planets, because, as Plato has observed, 'a doctor without astrology is an eye without a pupil.' You will observe that I cure all diseases except those under the sign of Taurus or Capricornus, which are incurable, because they attack the head." Here Harlequin ceases to speak and they bring in some pretended paralytics; he gives them his powder, which is a variety of snuff, whereat they all sneeze violently and dance around the stage.

In the second act, several patients present themselves to the pretended doctor. "My daughter has lost her health!" cries one of those present. "Well, I've not found it yet!" retorts the ever-ready Harlequin. He orders a person to heal an incurable affection of the feet by cutting off his head, on the theory of *contrarius*

contraria curantur. He calls Scaramouche, and says to him, "I desire to show you the virtue of my powder." He places Scaramouche, who pretends to be helplessly crippled, on a bed of straw, and, after sprinkling him with his powder, sets the bed on fire, whereat that malingering party, scorched by the fire, takes to flight, pursued by the laughter of the appreciative audience.

* * *

MARCOUREAU DE BRECOURT

(Died in 1685).

THE GHOST OF MOLIERE.—COMEDY IN
ONE ACT.

Scene I.

Second Ghost: During the four years I have served this famous empiric, he has never given me the least information as to the poisons he composed. How many lives has he sold by this means to the highest bidder?

First Ghost: The secret of killing men is certainly connected with medicine, or we should not be seduced into this discourse. Yet it is a difficult matter to speak of doctors and not avoid the subject of death. It is a well-known fact that these gentlemen are a little vindictive, and that for some time past they have been preaching the vengeance of those who did not wish to die at their hands; and it happens that our grand master, Pluto, gives these people position here and vents his wrath on us for not speaking of the Faculty with due respect. Perhaps it were better to hold our tongues.

Second Ghost: The festival is arranged for these people and is to be prepared here.

First Ghost: I know not whether it be for doctors or others; but I do know that

Pluto will soon be here to manage the affair.

Scene 3.

Minos: In other times it was the ambition of a certain man to write what he desired to say, but this was a difficult task when nothing appeared to be perfect. There is not up to medicine even anything that has not been censured at his hands, and this is what he most often touched upon; and so well did he succeed on this subject that he still is feared, for they dread that they may be banished from earth for another six hundred years.

Pluto (seated on his throne): That would do me a great injury.

Scene 13.

Moliere: Ah! here are my friends, the doctors. Let us listen, and we will answer afterwards.

Pluto: Gentlemen, doctors, you are welcome. You visit a prince who honors you so much. I know full well all the obligations I owe your profession, and in this vast Empire of the Dead you can well boast of playing a good part in my interests. So, in return, I can refuse you no favor you demand of me. Ask and ye shall receive!

First Physician: Grand Master of the Dead, you see before you the very flower of medical chivalry—your ever faithful servitors.

Second Physician: We have never let the occasion slip to give you full evidence of the marks of our esteem and fidelity.

Pluto: I know that full well, for your opium, emetics, and bleedings render ample testimony that you truly and loyally served me.

Third Physician: We deemed it our simple duty.

Pluto: The many that come to me fully attest that fact.

Fourth Physician: It is only a pleasure to serve so great a Monarch.

Pluto: I am ever under obligations to you all, and it gives me joy to greet you. I know too that your aid is still necessary in the world above, and that I am somewhat vexed that age has called you here I will admit. Nevertheless, I am consoled by the thought that you have left children on the earth who know how to practice your trade, and have already sent me an installment of their clients with whom they experimented. But what do you desire of me?

Third Physician: We come to demand justice of a mortal who pretended that the art of medicine was an imposture and gross charlatanism.

Pluto: Is it someone I know?

Fourth Physician: He was one who raged without a foundation of truth for his assertions; a fellow who satirized all our profession. A man whose animosity was envenomed solely by envy, and who organized a conspiracy against medical practitioners.

Moliere [aside]: I will confound these superb pretenders!

Third Physician: He is already predicting bad things of us here. Even the Dead seem now leagued against us; he still emits his calumny against us, and is full as ever of biting sarcasms against our doctors. So, Grand Monarch, we come to you humbly as a committee from our illustrious Medical Faculty, to show that the increase of your Empire depends on repressing the audacity and insolence of even the Dead, whom he inspires.

Pluto: I shall teach these dead how to live. I fully understand, and shall tell them you are the firmest supporters of my

State. But who are these dead who impudently dare to discredit your trade? Name, only name them to me, and I shall make a horrid example of them!

Fourth Physician: There are a number of lesser spirits who swell the general torrent of abuse, and who echo the complaints of another who has lied. It is the author of our injuries whom we desire to punish. It is this latter-day Cato, who inveighs against us, and who, in his scorn of our noble profession, has pushed his audacity to the point of sublime ridicule, rendering us a veritable laughing stock to the public. It is the ghost of this man, this impertinent slanderer of the Medical Faculty, on whom we invoke your direst vengeance.

Pluto [to Moliere]: Answer to this charge!

Moliere [to the Doctors]: So you wish me, gentlemen? You demand vengeance for the contempt I bear your illustrious Faculty? I admit that I have made you all the laughing stock of the public. As it is necessary to answer you, I shall make your characteristics more accursed than ever. Pluto, Monarch of Hell, I swear here, by the respect I owe you, Great Master, that it is not against medicine that I have so bitterly inveighed. I have adored the study of the Healing Art, I revere its judicious practice; but I abhor and detest the pernicious and wicked use that is made of it by senseless fools whom only a diploma makes doctors; it is only against those who abuse the name of physician that I deign to respond.

Pluto: You argue sensibly enough.

Moliere [to the Doctors]: Imposters! You perpetually prove your ignorance and the uncertainty of your practice by continual disagreements. Never in your simplest prescriptions has the world ever seen

you follow each others prescriptions without adding or subtracting something. As to your opinions, they are more varied than your practice. Some say the cause of disease lies in the humors; others in the blood. Some with pompous assaninity impute all maladies to invisible atoms that enter the pores of the body. Some contend that all affections arise from a deficiency of force; some that they proceed from an inequality in the elements of the organization and the character of the air we respire, or the abundance, poverty, or corruption of our food. This diversity of opinion fully evidences the ignorance of doctors; but the weakness and rashness of the sick who abandon themselves to contrary gales is more stupid.

Pluto [to Doctors]: Gentlemen, do you hear this?

Moliere: The only thing seeming half unanimous in their schools is their idea on the composition of a medicine. They say one thing purges the brain, another warms the stomach, another refreshes the liver,—as if in such mixtures each remedy carried its own point of etiquette, and that all were not absorbed by the system at the same time. It is well that these gentlemen are satisfied with the efficacy of their drugs, for if one of the remedies happens to be in the road of another, a part of the anatomy to be warmed might be cooled—and what becomes of the patient?

Pluto [to Doctors]: Gentlemen, listen to this argument!

Moliere: But these fraudulent imposters abuse the occasion; they tyrannically usurp all family authority when dealing with the sick overcome with disease and dreading Death. They take every advantage of mankind's weakness and superstition, and in this dangerous moment they brazenly experiment with our lives with any remedy

that may suggest itself to their ambitious imagination. These scoundrels try anything, and, in this confidence, the sun shines on their successes and the earth hides all failures.

Pluto [to the Doctors]: Gentlemen, listen to his remarks!

Moliere: I remember at this point with some grief, the weakness of one of my friends, who stupidly confided in their seductive promises and poorer treatment. Two hours after he was attacked, the physician whom he had called came to ask what effects his remedies had secured. "I sweat!" exclaimed the sufferer. Three hours after he came to demand how his

patient felt. "I have a chill and quake," said the invalid. "That is well!" exclaimed the doctor. In the evening, when the physician returned for the fourth time and made inquiry, he was informed that his patient was swollen up with dropsy; he answered, "It is well!" The next day, calling on the patient, he asked "How fares he to-day?" and the reply was, "My dear friend, he is dead." "Ah!" cried I, overcome with grief, "how happy are animals, where simple Nature can cure without the aid of medical consultations!"

Pluto: Gentlemen, what think you of this?

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POPULAR FRENCH ANECDOTES REFLECTING AGAINST DOCTORS.

[These are from notes collected from time to time by the Translator.]

PIERRE CHIRRAC (French surgeon, 1650 to 1732).

Chirrac once heard a priest proclaiming on the subject of the resuscitation of Lazarus from the dead, remarked: "If he had been my patient they could not have raised him."—*Choix d'Anecdotes*.

Chirrac was attacked with apoplexy. Several of his medical friends were called to his assistance, and bled him repeatedly. Chirrac, after partially returning to consciousness, became delirious again, and believed himself to be at a patient's bedside. His right hand seized his left wrist and felt the pulse. Then he cried: "I have been called in too late. You doctors have bled this man when he should have been purged. Fatal error! He is dying!" and soon after expired.

* * *

ANDRE JOSEPH PANCKOUCKE

(1700 to 1753).

On the death of the celebrated Boerhaave, they found among his effects a book that was said to contain all the secrets of medical art worth knowing. Those who bought this treasure, on opening the work found a volume of white paper leaves, perfectly blank except on one rine, where was written this apothegm:

"Keep your head cool, your bowels open, your feet warm, and you will mock the doctors."

Falconet was one day called to a lady suffering from an imaginary complaint. On being questioned, she admitted that she ate, drank and slept well and had all the apparent signs of health. "Never mind, madam," remarked the Doctor, "I will give you a remedy that will remove all these complaints."

The physician Du Moulin said to several of his *confreres* who stood around his bedside deploring his fate: "Gentlemen, I leave only three eminent physicians behind me." Believing he was about to name them out of compliment, the doctors stood filled with pride, when he continued: "These three are eminently successful practitioners I leave behind me: Water, Exercise, and Diet."—*Dictionnaire des Anecdotes*.

Crebillon the tragedien, had a troublesome malady several years before achieving his success in his "Catalina," and his physician, Hermont, one day asked him to present him the first two acts. Crebillon only answered him by repeating the verse:

"Ah! should one inherit from him he assassinate."

—*Galerie de l'Ancienne Cour*.

JEAN FRANCOIS MAMONTEL

(1723 to 1799).

Malouin imagined I was taking his lavements and infusions. This I did not do, and at the end of the usual period the malady disappeared. Malouin rejoiced in what he considered a glorious cure. I did not attempt to restrain his triumph by undecieving him. "Ah! my friend," said he, "you think there is nothing in medicine and the knowledge of doctors." I answered him that I was a strong believer. "I do not think so," he responded, "inasmuch as you sometimes speak of the profession slightly." Whereat I retorted, "But think of Moliere?" Then closing his fists in wrath he looked me with fixed eyes and exclaimed in wrath, "Yes, but he's dead, too!"

On another occasion Dr. Malouin was visited by a celebrated philosopher who had taken one prescription for four years and recovered. When he had made this astonishing statement, Malouin cried out in a voice of profound admiration, "Embrace me, my friend, you are worthy of being one of my patients."

* * *

SEBASTIEN NICHOLAS CHAM-

FORT (French satirist, 1741 to 1794).

Dr. J. operated on one of his clients and cut off the leg. A relative of the victim took the surgeon to one side and said, "Do you think, Doctor, that our friend will recover?" To which the medical scientist replied, "I never had the slightest hope of such a good ending." And the indignant relative thereat exclaimed, "Why make him suffer, then? Why in

the Devil operate on a person given over for lost?" Then said the surgeon calmly, "Oh, it is necessary to humor patients a little!"

We all know what familiarity the King of Prussia permitted to his immediate friends. General Quintius Icilius was one of those who profited most by this liberty. The King, before the battle of Rosbach, remarked that if he lost the day he would go back to Venice, where he had formerly lived, and there practice medicine. When Quintius responded, "Always in the killing business, eh?"

One day the King said to his physician, "Tell me truly, doctor, how many men have you slaughtered during your life?" And the physician answered promptly, "Almost three hundred thousand *less* than you, Sire!"

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VICOMPTE DE LAUNAY (Nineteenth century).

Gerard de Nerval had been locked up, a little too soon, as insane, and when released and asked, "What disease have you had?" he replied, "A hot fever, complicated with doctors!"

Madam X. every day received, between the hours of two and three, her physician, Dr. Z., a most entertaining conversationalist and amiable gentleman. One day Dr. Z. called, according to custom, and was not received. He ordered the servant to announce his name again, and the valet brought back the answer, "Madam is sick to-day and does not desire to see a doctor."

Cardinal Richelieu, fearing himself

about to die, pressed his physicians to tell him truly what they thought of his condition and how much longer he might live. All replied that a life so precious to the world should interest the aid of Heaven, and that God would make a miracle and cure him. The Cardinal was not satisfied with these flatterers, but sent for blunt and honest old Dr. Chicot, physician to the King, and implored the latter to tell him the truth. "In twenty-four hours," said

Dr. Chicot, "you will be dead or cured." The Cardinal was satisfied, and died in twenty-four hours.

A physician once asked Father Bourdaloue what he did to enjoy such good health, and the priest responded that he ate only one meal a day and took no medicine. "Keep the secret," cried the doctor, "for if you make it public you will ruin the profession."

EXTRACTS FROM ENGLISH WRITERS.

[These few extracts by English writers are added by the Translator, and include only the commonly quoted lines familiar to the average American medical reader.]

SHAKESPEARE (1564 to 1616).

Throw physic to the dogs; I'll none of it.
—*Macbeth*.

Take physic, pomp;
Expose thyself to feel as others feel
—*Macbeth*.

* * *

ROBERT BURTON (1576 to 1639).

*Anatomy of Melancholy.*OF PHYSIC WHICH CURETH WITH
MEDICINES.

Paulus Jovius, in his description of Britain, and Levinus Lemnius observe as much of this, our island, that there was of old no use of physic among us and but little at this day, except it be for a few nice idle citizens, surfeiting courtiers and stall-fed gentlemen lubbers. The country people use kitchen physic, and common experience tells us that they live freest from all manner of infirmities that make least use of apothecaries' physic. Some think physicians kill as many as they save, and who can tell "How many murders they make in a year?" *Quibus impune licet hominem occidere*, "that many kill folk and have a reward for it;" and, according to the old Dutch proverb, "a new physician must have a new church-yard," and who daily observes it not? Many that

did ill under physicians' hands have happily escaped when they have been given over by them, left to God and Nature and themselves; 'twas Pliny's dilemma of old. "Every disease is either curable or incurable, a man recovers of it or is killed by it; both ways physic is to be rejected. If it be deadly, it cannot be cured; if it be helped, it requires no physician, Nature will expel it of itself." It is no art at all, as some hold, no, not worthy the name of a liberal science, as Petronius Canonherius, a patrician of Rome and a great doctor himself "one of their own tribe" proves by sixteen arguments, because it is mercenary as now used, base and as fiddlers play for a reward. *Juridicis, medicis, fisco fas vivere raptis*, 'tis a corrupt trade, no science, art, no profession; the beginning, practice and profession of it, all is nought, full of imposture, uncertainty, and doth generally more harm than good. The Devil himself was the first inventor it; "*Inventum est medicina meum*," said Apollo, and what was Apollo but the Devil? The Greeks first made an art of it, and they were all deluded by Apollo's sons, priests, oracles. Æsculapius, his son, had temples erected to his deity, and did many famous cures; but, as Lactantius holds, he was a magician, a mere impostor. The Arabians received medicine from the Greeks, and so the

Latins, adding new precepts and medicines of their own, but so imperfect still, that through ignorance of professors, impostors, mountebanks, empirics, disagreeing of sectaries (which are as many almost as there be diseases), envy, covetousness and the like, they do much harm among us.

They are so different in their consultations, prescriptions, mistaking many times the party's constitution, disease, and causes of it, they give quite contrary physic. "One sayeth this, another that," out of singularity or opposition. As he said of Adrian, *multitudo medicorum principem interfecit*, "a multitude of physicians hath killed the Emperor;" *plus a medico quam a morbo periculi*, "more danger there is from the physician than from the disease."

Besides, there is much imposture and malice among them. "All arts," sayeth Cardan, "admit of cozening, physic, among the rest doth appropriate it to herself," and tells a story of one Curtius, a physician in Venice; because he was a stranger, and practiced amongst them, the rest of the physicians did still cross him in all his precepts. If he prescribed hot medicines, they would prescribe cold, *miscentes pro calidis frigida pro purgantibus astringenta*, binders for purgatives, *omnia perturbabant*. If the party miscarried, *Curtium damnabant*, Curtius killed him, that disagreed from them; if he recovered, then they cured him themselves.

But it is their ignorance that does more harm than rashness; their art is wholly conjectural, if it be an art, uncertain, imperfect, and got by killing of men; they are a kind of butchers, slayers, leeches; chirurgeons and apothecaries especially are indeed the physician's hangmen, *carnicifces*, and common executioners; though,

to say truth, physicians themselves come not far behind; for, according to that faceté epigram of Maximilianus Urentius, what's the difference?

Chirurgus medico quo differt? Scilicet isto,
Enecat hic succis, enecat ille manu;
Carnifice hoc ambo tantum differre videntur
Tardius hi faciunt, quod facit ille cito.

Or, as rendered by Burton, "How does the surgeon differ from the doctor? In this respect: one kills by drugs, the other by the hand; both only differ from the hangman in this way: they do slowly what he does in an instant."

The most rational and skillful of them are so often deceived, that, as Tholosanus infers, "I had rather believe and commit myself to a mere empiric than to a mere doctor." It was Xenophon who told Cyrus that, to his thinking, physicians "were like tailors and cobblers, the one mended our bodies and the other our clothes." But I will urge these cavilling and contumelious arguments no further, lest some physician should mistake me and deny me physic when I am sick; for my part, I am well persuaded of physic; I can distinguish the abuse from the use, in this and many other arts and sciences; *aliud vinum, aliud ebrietas*, wine and drunkenness are two distinct things.

* * *

JOHN DRYDEN (1531 to 1701).

Better to hunt in field for health unbought
Than fee the doctor for a nauseous draught.
The wise for cure on exercise depend—
God never made his work for men to mend.

* * *

GEORGE HERBERT (1593 to 1632).

After death the Doctor.
—*Jacula Prudentum.*

MILTON (1608 to 1674).

Budge doctors of the stoic fur.
—*Comus*.

* * *

TOM BROWN⁽¹⁾ (1663 to 1704).

I do not love thee, Doctor Fell.
The reason why I cannot tell.
But this alone I know full well,
I do not love thee, Doctor Fell.

1 Non amo te, Sabidi, nec possum dicere quare;
Hoc tantum possum dicere, non amo te.
—Martial, Epigram I, 33.

Je ne vous aime pas, Hylas;
Je n'en saurois dire la cause.
Je seulement une chose,
C'est que je ne vous aime pas.
—Bussy, *Compte de Rabutin*, Book I.

JOHN GAY (1688 to 1732).

“Is there hope?” the sick man said.
The silent doctor shook his head.
—*The Sick Man and the Angel*.

* * *

POPE (1688 to 1744).

Who shall decide when doctors disagree,
And soundest casuists doubt, like you and me?
—*Moral Essays*.

* * *

GEORGE COLMAN (1762 to 1836).

But when ill indeed,
E'en dismissing the doctor don't always succeed.
—*Lodgings for Single Gentlemen*.

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